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CHCPR502E Organise experiences to facilitate and enhance children’s development, version 2 (2012)
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Introduction

1. General introduction

Welcome to CHCECE022 Promote children’s agency

This national unit of competency is part of the CHC Community Services Training Package.

2. Using this learner guide

This learner guide may be used on its own, for self-directed learning, or it may be used as additional material to support group learning.

Group learning

If you are studying this unit of competence as part of a group of learners with a facilitator then she/he will guide you in how to use these materials, including which learning topics and activities should be completed.

Self-directing learning

If you are studying this unit of competency as a self-directed learner you will have a facilitator assigned to you. This person will be available to support you as you work through this material. To study this unit effectively, learners who are working without facilitated group sessions should work through the materials in the order that they appear in the learning guide, completing all the readings and all the activities.

Learning strategies

This learner guide contains a variety of different learning activities to support different individual learning styles. In addition to the activities described in this guide, it is important that you discuss the issues raised with others such as your colleagues, friends, practitioners working in the field and other students. Discussion plays an important role in understanding and remembering new information.

To promote active learning:

1. Come up with your own answers first, before you attempt any readings.
2. Compare and discuss your answers with others.
3. Research the topic and access readings, videos, etc.
4. Ask yourself, ‘What do I think about this subject now that I have studied it in depth? What have I learned?’

The learner guide is designed for you to work at your own pace and at a time convenient for you. It also allows you to self-direct and control your learning.

There may be some tutorials, practical sessions or workshops which you are required to attend. If this is required you will be notified of the times and dates of these activities at the commencement of the unit.

You also have access to tutorial support. This is an additional support service that can help you with time management, study skills, editing of your work, organisation and even literacy skills. It is important for you to contact your facilitator and ask for this support if you require it. Normally this service is accessed at your nearest TAFE College.

You may also need to access resources at a TAFE college or library. These resources may include computer facilities and software, books, library material and videos. The resources are listed under the ‘resources’ heading for this unit and references to these resources are made at the relevant sections of the guide.

When working through the material there may be reference to legislation or regulations. Over time legislation and regulations may change. It is important that you access the most current version. Refer to your facilitator if you are unsure.

Four steps to learn new skills

This learner guide is based on four main learning activities.

1. **Thinking** – Reflecting on the subject, your own experience and ideas, and what you hope to achieve from this learning process. Reflective thinking prepares you to learn new skills.

2. **Attending** – Reading the contents of this guide carefully, with understanding. This may involve asking questions, rewriting material in your own words, discussing the material with other people, or reading additional reference materials. Attending provides you with the information you need to carry out a new skill.

3. **Doing** – Putting new skills into practice. This may involve following specific activities or assessment tasks in this guide, or putting the new skill directly into practice in your workplace. Using new information in a practical way will help you to remember and understand.

4. **Reviewing** – Did the new skill achieve what you expected to achieve? Seek feedback from your workplace supervisor, facilitator, clients or colleagues. Ask more questions if you need to. Complete the review activities in this guide. When you have achieved competency, keep a record of your completed tasks as evidence of your skill.
If you have difficulties

If you have any difficulties while working through this material you should ask your facilitator for help. For example you may have trouble understanding a concept or accessing a resource that is required.

Your TAFE College has a range of support services available to help you through your course.

If you have a disability which may affect your ability to learn or to complete the assessment events you should talk with your facilitator or college ‘Disabilities Consultant’ about your right to reasonable adjustment to the way you are assessed.

In order to be successful with this type of learning it helps if you:

- can apply self discipline
- stay motivated and focused on achieving your goal
- manage your time to include time for study and to complete assessments
- can take responsibility for your own learning

3. Prior knowledge and experience

You may already have knowledge, skills and experience relevant to this unit of competency that you have gained due to your work, life experience or from a previous course. If this is the case ask your facilitator about having this learning recognised. You will need to produce evidence to demonstrate that you have the skills, knowledge and competency level required for this unit of competency. Your facilitator can advise you as to what types of evidence you could provide.

4. Unit of competency overview

Unit description

For information on this unit of competency, including descriptor, elements and performance criteria, required skills and knowledge, as well as assessment requirements, refer to the website http://training.gov.au
5. Assessment

How you will be assessed

A number of assessment tasks have been identified to ensure that you are adequately assessed in relation to all the elements, essential knowledge and skills and critical aspects of assessment associated with this national unit of competency. Your facilitator will ensure the assessment tasks suit your learning situation, the service you work in (if applicable) and the amount of access you have to a workplace environment for “on the job” assessment.

Your facilitator will provide you with a Student Assessment Guide that details the requirements of the unit of competency. You will also receive the required assessments and evidence guides and any grading criteria if relevant to the unit. Due dates for the assessments will also be discussed with you. Talk to your facilitator if you are unsure about any of the requirements. Once you understand the assessment requirements and what is expected you will need to sign the Student Assessment Guide as proof of this.

This unit may be assessed in conjunction with other units of competency. Your facilitator will advise you if this is relevant to the unit you are studying.

Check with your college or facilitator to find out the requirements associated with the handing in of assessments. If you are studying in NSW you should refer to the TAFENSW Assessment Policy.

About this unit

This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to promote and encourage children’s agency.

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

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

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


Guides, fact sheets and templates, 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 Establishing a stimulating environment

Quality environments for play and learning

Educators in children’s services have an important role to play in organising the space, time and resources that will foster children’s play, leisure and learning. Stonehouse (2002) describes the educator as the ‘architect of the environment’.

’The physical environment provides the opportunities to get involved, to combine materials and equipment...it provides the material ingredients from which to learn. The way in which the professional constructs the environment suggests possibilities and opportunities to the child’.

(Stonehouse, 2002, p.45)

’Balance’ is a key word to keep in mind when planning quality environments and experiences for children. Balance must be provided in the environment so that opportunities are available for children to both explore their areas of interest and to practise skills in all the principal developmental areas, consistent with the relevant approved learning framework. Remember that establishing an environment also involves considering both the physical environment as well as the interpersonal, social aspects. Later, in Section 2, we will look at developing your own philosophy and belief statements about play and what are important experiences for children.

Let’s discuss some of the terms we’re going to use in this unit. We’ll be using the words ‘provisions’, ‘experiences’ and ‘opportunities’ frequently. These terms are used deliberately to reflect current thinking in the early education and care field. The Early Years Learning Framework focuses on all the potential and possibilities of the physical environment and relationships we provide for children. At this level of your professional development it is appropriate to consider the bigger picture of the child’s overall experience. Words like ‘activity’ may limit our thinking to isolated events which have been designed by adults for children, and should be avoided.

The NSW Curriculum Framework (which was used to guide early childhood professional practice prior to the introduction of the EYLF in 2009) defined ‘activities’ as having the following limiting characteristics:

- Are usually only available at a designated time and for limited amounts of time
- Often require adult preparation and supervision
- Often have a pre-determined or fixed outcome
• Frequently result in a ‘product’ with the importance of process being overlooked
• Are designed and defined by the adults, not by children
• Are sometimes something that the adult has invested in
• Sometimes sit apart from the overall flow of the day or session, are often unrelated to the rest of the provisions
• Are often viewed by adults (both parents and professional) as having ‘educational’ value.

Activity 1.1

Read through the section ‘Learning Environments’ in the Early Years Learning Framework section that looks at Practice, pp. 15-16. Summarise the key points and discuss these with a colleague or another learner.
It is important to think in terms of ‘provisions’ rather than ‘activities’ because this will develop your ability to think in more holistic and creative ways. Educators certainly need to plan thoughtfully for children but we need to remember that it is often what happens when we implement these plans which will actually determine the quality of the child’s overall experience. What children do with the environment we provide may be unexpected and unimagined, and at times unbelievably wonderful! This is the magic of working on a deeper level with children.

As you work through this unit, try to focus on all the dimensions of the provisions: interactions and relationships, routines and daily living experiences, opportunities and possibilities offered by the physical environment and the structure and flow of the day. Be aware of your role in making the difference between a ‘good’ environment and a ‘great’ environment for children. The educator might be the ‘architect’ of the environment but a good architect consults with their clients to ensure the building suits their needs and dreams!

This is how we create a place where children are encouraged to make choices in their play activities and to actively explore these.
When an environment is full of stimulating experiences but disorganised and chaotic, it is difficult for children to feel inspired to engage and persist with experiences. The adults need to facilitate children’s play choices by setting up inspiring play spaces and arranging them carefully in the environment. Children should have appropriate access to play materials and resources. Materials should be presented for play in a logical way and kept in accessible storage. Educators need to put effort into collecting the most appropriate types of boxes, shelves, baskets, tubs and so on for each type of equipment to facilitate children’s self management of their environment.

Activity 1.2

What aspects of the physical environment do you think are important in creating an inviting play space? Drawing on your work and professional experiences, list all the things you can think of.
You will have explored the notion of aesthetic appeal in your previous studies. Remember that ‘aesthetic’ refers to that which appeals to the senses. Keeping in mind that young children experience and gain information about the world through their senses it is easy to see why we need to put so much value on aesthetic appeal. Whenever you are planning provisions for children or extending a spontaneous experience you need to be thinking about the aesthetic qualities of the event.

Activity 1.3

Think about providing a play dough experiences for a group of children aged 2 – 4 years.

How could you add aesthetic appeal to this provision? May sure you consider adding things that appealed to the children’s senses - visual, auditory, tactile, olfactory (smell), and/or taste.

List your ideas.
For more information there are some excellent discussions of aesthetics and aesthetic development in children in:

- Crook, S. & Farmer, B. 2002, Just Imagine!
- Crook, S. 2004, Just Improvise!