



Appendices

SECTION 4



EARLY
LEARNING
ASSOCIATION
AUSTRALIA



Education
and Training

Early Learning Association Australia (ELAA) acknowledges the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this nation. We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we work and pay our respects to ancestors and Elders, past, present and emerging.

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ACRONYM	TITLE
AITSL	Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership
APST	Australian Professional Standards for Teachers
CoM	Committee of Management
DET	Department of Education and Training (Victoria)
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services (Victoria)
ECA	Early Childhood Australia
ECT	Early Childhood Teacher
ELAA	Early Learning Association Australia
EM&D	Employee Management & Development
EYM	Early Years Management Organisations
NQF	National Quality Framework
NQS	National Quality Standards
OHS	Occupational Health and Safety
PD	Professional Development
PI	Performance Indicator
QIP	Quality Improvement Plan
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timely
ToR	Terms of Reference
VECTEA	Victorian Early Childhood Teachers and Educators Agreement
VIT	Victorian Institute of Teaching
WT	Workings Towards
WWCC	Working with Children Check

CODES AND STANDARDS

Service Code of Conduct and Values

All services should have a Code of Conduct and may also have a values statement that outlines or describes behaviours expected in the workplace. These documents should be made available to employees during orientation and induction, and incorporated into the Employee Management and Development process.

A number of organisations have developed codes and standards. Below are links to some of these that may be helpful.

Child Safe Standards

Child Safe Standards work by providing a minimum standard of child safety across all organisations. They drive changes in organisational culture to embedding child safety in everyday thinking and practice, highlighting that everyone has a role to keep children safe from abuse, prevent child abuse and ensure organisations and businesses have effective processes in place to respond to and report all allegations of child abuse.

<https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safety/being-a-child-safe-organisation/the-child-safe-standards/>

Reportable Conduct Scheme

The Commission for Children and Young People has independent oversight of the Reportable Conduct Scheme; and requires providers of early years' services to respond to allegations of child abuse and other child-related misconduct, against their workers and volunteers.

<https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/reportable-conduct-scheme/>

Victorian Institute of Teachers Code of Conduct

APPLIES TO ALL EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHERS REGISTERED WITH THE VICTORIAN INSTITUTE OF TEACHING

The Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) is an independent statutory authority for the teaching profession, whose primary function is to regulate members of the teaching profession.

It is a legal requirement for all teachers to be registered with VIT in order to be employed in a school or early childhood education and care service or Victorian children's service.

The Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) has developed a Code of Conduct that sets out principles describing the professional conduct, personal conduct and professional competence expected of an educator by their colleagues and the community. The code is to promote the values that educators see as underpinning their profession, to guide them in their everyday conduct and to help them to solve ethical dilemmas.

The code can be accessed at: <http://www.vit.vic.edu.au>
Contact: vit@vit.vic.edu.au or 1300 888 067

Early Childhood Australia's Code of Ethics

Early Childhood Australia (ECA) has developed a Code of Ethics for early childhood professionals that complements the VIT Code of Conduct. It is widely accepted as the industry benchmark.

ECA says 'As an aspirational document, it does provide a basis for critical reflection, a guide for professional behaviour, and principles to inform individual and collective decision making.'

For a fee, a copy of ECA's Code of Ethics can be accessed at: www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au

Australian Professional Standards for Teachers

The Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) has developed the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST), which comprises seven standards that outline what early childhood teachers (ECT) should know and be able to do. Although the first two out of four career stages (graduate and proficient) in the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers are adopted in Victoria, services might choose to use the other two stages (Highly Accomplished and Lead) as a guide.

The standards can be accessed at: www.aitsl.edu.au/teach/standards

Information about how VIT applies the standards for teacher registration can be accessed at: <https://www.vit.vic.edu.au/>



FURTHER READING

The following literature provides evidence-based research and theoretical frameworks for understanding how supporting the development of individual employees contributes to the overall quality of early childhood programs and how this can be effectively achieved. The literature has been divided into seven themes that were significant across the articles, however each article may also cover multiple themes. Employers are encouraged to share this literature list with their employees as useful resources for their professional development.

1. Leadership

Leadership in early childhood education and care (ECEC) is considered to be of paramount importance in building quality and contributing to the effective development of employees. Recognising its importance, the government has introduced many policy initiatives and programs to enhance leadership capacity across the sector in Victoria. The following articles highlight how leadership impacts upon the performance of employees, driving quality in ECEC programs.

- 1.1 Brownlee, J., Nailon, D., & Tickle, E. (2010). Constructing Leadership in Child Care: Epistemological Beliefs and Transformational Leadership [online]. *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood*, 35(3), 95-104.**

This article discusses how effective leadership supports better outcomes for children. In particular, the authors explore the perceptions of 15 childcare directors and their understanding of leadership styles. The focus remains upon the impact of transformational leadership versus transactional leadership. Specifically, the article discusses epistemological beliefs (focussing upon knowledge gained from valid research methods) and how these beliefs influence leadership to develop employees.

- 1.2 Campbell-Evans, G, Stamopoulos, E. & Maloney C. (2014). Building Leadership Capacity in Early Childhood Pre-Service Teachers. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education* 39: 41-49.**

The authors of this article demonstrate the importance of supporting leaders in their ability to lead their employees in their performance improvement. This is specifically in relation to supporting pre-service teachers who are finalising their initial training and how this might support them as they enter the early childhood workforce.

- 1.3 Davitt, G., & Ryder, D. (2018). Dispositions of a responsible early childhood education leader: Voices from the field. *Journal of Educational Leadership, Policy and Practice*, 33(1), 18–31.**

This article highlights the importance of leadership dispositions through a research project known as Leaders Grow Leaders. Specifically, the authors identified six leadership dispositions (a communicator; relationship focused; caring; being supportive; a leader of growth and change and whilst also acting as a critical friend) that contributed to understanding responsibilities and were instrumental in growing others. They also concluded that dedicated professional development that supports leaders to 'grow' others is crucial in developing staff and effective teams.

- 1.4 Loo, J. K. Y., & Agbenyega, J. (2015). A critical analysis of the Australian ECEC policy reform: An opportunity for transforming educators into pedagogical leaders? *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood*, 40(2), 127-131.**

This article highlights the importance of pedagogical leadership in building quality into educational programs. More specifically it focusses upon the issues that have occurred in this type of leadership and how educators might be transformed into such inspirational leaders who can develop others and engage in strong critical reflection. The article discusses what good leadership is, including the multiple layers that exist within leadership and how this might be used to enhance the performance of educators, particularly in relation to pedagogy and practice.



2. Mentoring and Coaching

The revised Guide to the National Quality Framework highlights the importance of educational leadership to support the development of employees in their pedagogy and practice. The guide also suggests strategies to use in this development, such as mentoring and coaching. The following literature explores various approaches to mentoring and coaching that may be useful in the development of employees in ECEC programs.

2.1 Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA). (2017). *Guide to the National Quality Framework*. Sydney: Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority.

The guide provides comprehensive information relating to the practices that enhance quality in relation to the National Quality Standards, as well as related legislative and learning frameworks. Of particular importance is the description of the educational leader as well as service management and how these roles and processes influence the positive performance of all employees in relation to providing quality education and care for young children.

2.2 Cameron, M., Whatman, J., Hodgen, E., McLeod, L., Bright, N., Nuttall, J., & Nolan, A. (2014). *Evaluation of the Guidelines for Induction and Mentoring and Mentor*. Teachers Final Report. Wellington, NZ: New Zealand Council of Educational Research.

Understanding the impact of effective mentoring is crucial to improving employee performance. This article draws upon the knowledge developed from a research project implemented in New Zealand that focussed on shifting mentoring practices from advice giving and guidance to more educative mentoring.

2.3 Desimone, L. M., Hochberg, E. D., Porter, A. C., Polikoff, M. S., Schwartz, R., & Johnson, L. J. (2014). Formal and informal mentoring: Complementary, compensatory, or consistent? *Journal of Teacher Education*, 65(2), 88–110. doi:10.1177/0022487113511643

Mentoring, according to this article, requires a certain number of attributes in the mentor and mentee that contribute to a positive and effective mentoring relationship. Of particular importance is the way the mentee feels about the mentor, how often interactions occur and the type of discussions that develop within these interactions. The authors also suggest that effective mentoring can lead to teacher retention and confidence in their emerging professional identity.

2.4 Hobson, A. J. (2016). Judgementoring and how to avert it: introducing ONSIDE Mentoring for beginning teachers. *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education*, 5(2), 87-110. doi:10.1108/IJMCE-03-2016-0024

This article addresses the approaches to mentoring that have a significant impact on employee performance. Specifically, Hobson addresses the judgemental approaches that have been used previously and challenges the role of novice-expert mentoring relationship. He offers an alternative approach to mentoring that incorporates high levels of respect and reciprocity that enhances the skills of both the mentee and the mentor.

2.5 Morrissey, A.-M., & Nolan, A. (2015). Just another meeting?: investigating mentoring for early childhood teachers in Victoria. *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood*, 40, 40+.

Fostering positive mentoring relationships is crucial in further development of employees, however there are some concerns in relation to meetings and the importance of valuing the time that is available that can be devoted to such meetings. This article explores ways that mentoring can be explored beyond the concept of 'just another meeting', providing strategies to enhance the productivity that happens between mentee-mentor engagement.

- 2.6 Nolan, A. (2017). Effective mentoring for the next generation of early childhood teachers in Victoria, Australia. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*, 25(3), 272-290. doi:10.1080/13611267.2017.1364800

Exploration of mentee-mentor engagement is crucial to understanding how teachers can enhance their practice from graduation. In this article, Nolan suggests that mentors need to be enabling, rather than judgemental in their mentoring approaches. She highlights the importance of moving away from the expert/novice model and adopting reciprocity in the mentoring relationships where the mentee and mentor learn from each other through respectful and trusting engagement that involves deeper reflection.

- 2.7 Page, J., & Eadie, P. (2019). Coaching for continuous improvement in collaborative, interdisciplinary early childhood teams. *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood*, 44(3), 270–284. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1836939119855542>

The concept of continuous improvement has been embedded in current ECEC policy, particularly during the national reform that has been implemented over the last decade. The authors of this article discuss such notions, focussing upon the idea that leadership and governance are instrumental in driving such improvement. The article discusses the findings of two research projects that used collaborative interdisciplinary coaching to build capacity in educators. The authors found that such coaching increased educators' content knowledge and ability to be reflective of their own practice, leading to better performance as educators.

3. Professional Development

Whilst much of the literature supports ongoing and embedded programs for learning and development of employees, there is a drive still to engage in professional development, whether this be in the form of ongoing programs, single professional development sessions or action-research projects. The following literature highlights various methods that incorporates professional development in different ways.

- 3.1 Colmer, K., Waniganayake, M., & Field, L. (2014). Leading professional learning in early childhood centres: who are the educational leaders? *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood*, 39, 103+.

Having strong educational leadership skills is important in order to drive performance in other employees and the overall service. This article explores the importance of moving away from overly operational and supervisory leadership to one that moves employees to further develop in their profession.

- 3.2 Grieshaber, S., & Graham, L. J. (2017). Equity and educators enacting The Australian Early Years Learning Framework. *Critical Studies in Education*, 58(1), 89-103. doi:10.1080/17508487.2015.1126328

This article highlights the importance of being able to support all educators in understanding the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and in particular focuses upon the support highly educated educators and teachers can provide to early childhood educated co-workers. The article deliberates equitable practices in the expectations of practice and provides a way forward to support better understanding and application of the EYLF in performance.

- 3.3 Kilderry, A., Nolan, A., & Scott, C. (2017). 'Out of the loop': early childhood educators gaining confidence with unfamiliar policy discourse. *Early Years*, 37(4), 341-354. doi:10.1080/09575146.2016.1183595

This article is pivotal in understanding exactly how the sector is beginning to understand and apply the legislative changes to ECEC in regard to programming and practice as well as leadership. Focusing upon how educators are gaining confidence in such legislative practices, the research provided in this article highlights how educators are able to demonstrate confidence in articulating their knowledge of quality early childhood practice when they are familiar with it; however, are reluctant when they are not. This article calls for supporting educators to move from superficial understanding of theory to a more in-depth knowledge of how theory informs practice.



- 3.4 Melhuish, E., Howard, S. J., Siraj, I., Neilsen-Hewett, C., Kingston, D., de Rosnay, M., Luu, B. (2016). Fostering Effective Early Learning (FEEL) through a professional development programme for early childhood educators to improve professional practice and child outcomes in the year before formal schooling: study protocol for a cluster randomised controlled trial. *Trials*, 17(1), 602. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13063-016-1742-1>**

This article details the finding from a significant research project that discusses the impact of a robust and effectively designed professional development program that targets specific skills in employees. The Fostering Effective Early Learning (FEEL) study explored how the benefits or targeted professional development enhanced specific learning in employees (from 90 long-day care and preschool centres in NSW) to develop educators in their performance and ability to support children in numeracy, literacy and self-regulation.

- 3.5 Williford, A. P., Carter, L. M., Maier, M. F., Hamre, B. K., Cash, A., Pianta, R. C., & Downer, J. T. (2017). Teacher engagement in core components of an effective, early childhood professional development course: Links to changes in teacher–child interactions. *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*, 38(1), 102–118. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10901027.2016.1269028>**

Understanding why specific professional development courses and strategies work to effectively improve educator performance is crucial as this knowledge can lead to higher levels of impact within the sector. The authors of this article explored such concepts to determine why tailored professional development is more effective at producing practice change and how this might be used to enhance the effectiveness educators have in their settings.

4. Performance Development

The development of employees is crucial to contributing to the ongoing drive for quality in ECEC programs. Developing employees requires the implementation of effective systems as well as a positive mindset that sets the pace for ongoing improvement. The following literature provides evidence-based understanding in the use of performance development systems, as well as how various employees might respond to such systems. The articles provide sound guidance and recommendations that support the processes and practices in developing staff and understanding how to facilitate positive responsiveness towards employee development systems.

- 4.1 Nuttall, J. (2016). Leadership for professional practice development in early childhood education: From 'performance management' to 'system development' *Australian Educational Leader*, 38(2), 14–17.**

This article problematises the traditional concept of performance appraisal systems and focusses upon the process of capacity-building in employees, specifically those working in ECEC. The author proposes that by focussing upon the collective, rather than only the individual, and using Vygotsky's conceptual understanding of the Zone of Proximal Development, employees have the potential to focus more on values and aspirations, rather than merely the tasks at hand. Nuttall focusses on the collective outcome which shifts mindsets from “How can I get you to change?” to ‘How can we work together to change the way we do things around here?’” (p. 15).

5. Effective Teams in Early Childhood Settings

Improvement in individual employees is a key factor in developing effective teams in early childhood education and care settings. Relationality is a crucial aspect here for employees to not only check in with their own performance but use their performance to complement others they work with. The following literature provides evidence-based research that outlines strategies best suited to developing effective teams and their performance.

- 5.1 Melasalmi, A., & Husu, J. (2019). Shared professional agency in Early Childhood Education: An in-depth study of three teams. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 84, 83–94. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2019.05.002>**

Having professional agency is crucial to enable professionals to self-reflect and build upon their performance as educators. This article discusses the findings of a research project that used participatory action research to explore ways teams could cultivate a professional learning culture through shared agency. The findings suggest that teams with high agency were able to identify and focus upon their attributes (what they could do well together) rather than the issues which contributed to growth in many aspects of their lives and work. Additionally, suggestions are made for professional development and strategies to build relational agency within teams that lead towards better performance and connectedness.

- 5.2 O'Neill, S., & Stephenson, J. (2012). Exploring Australian pre-service teachers sense of efficacy, its sources, and some possible influences. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 28(4), 535–545. doi:10.1016/j.tate.2012.01.008**

This article is crucial in understanding the role of pre-service teacher mentoring and the ongoing impact it may have on the teacher as they graduate and improve their performance. The authors specifically address some of the contributing factors of teacher burnout and attrition and how this might be addressed through better mentoring and approaches that build better efficacy.

6. The Purely Human Resource Management Angle

While the positive aspects of why an employer should focus on developing their employees are established through research, there is a more practical and compliance-oriented side to why this is critical. The following articles reinforce the need for employee development and feedback through a performance feedback system.

- 6.1 Ingui, S. (2012) as cited on 23 August 2012, Performance reviews and Employee management of employees – criteria for effectiveness, CBP Lawyers: <http://www.cbp.com.au/Publications/Performance-reviews-and-performance-management-of>**

This article highlights the importance of a performance development system as a means of recording the progression and development of employees, setting future objectives, flushing out frustrations in the workplace and in the event of things not working well, as a record of the conversations and development measures that the employer has implemented for the employee.

7. Importance of Performance Development

- 7.1 <https://www.inc.com/chad-halvorson/5-reasons-you-should-be-investing-in-employee-development.html>**

This web article by Halvorson, C., outlines the key reasons for employers to invest in developing their employees – attracting and retaining top talent within the organisation and creating a future focused approach to aid the growth of the business.

- 7.2 <https://www.managementstudyguide.com/employee-development-importance.htm>**

This article by the Management Study Guide (MSG) USA underscores the importance of employers developing their employees not only as a way of enhancing employee skills and aiding their professional and personal growth, but also as a way of creating a learning culture in the organisations, helping employees to do self-analysis and strengthening the relationship amongst employees to create a harmonious workplace.



8. Other Useful Links for Further Reading and Exploration:

8.1 www.visible-learning.org

A website that brings together freely available online resources (including blogs, TED talks etc) related to Professor John Hattie's Visible Learning Research. Though the materials focus on Australia's school system, they are equally thought provoking in the context of early learning. Professor Hattie has been the Director of the Melbourne Educational Research Institute at the University of Melbourne and the Chair of the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL).

8.2 www.aitsl.edu.au

This is the website of the Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL). This site provides access to tools and research publications that may be of relevance and may be adaptable in the context of early childhood education.

8.3 www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/Pages/beginning-ect-conference.aspx

This website provides session overviews, videos etc, from the 2019 Beginning Early Childhood Teacher Conferences held in Melbourne, Melton, Dandenong and Ballarat. Topics addressed in these sessions include wellbeing in the workplace, the power of conversation, and relationships with educators, peers and other professionals.

8.4 <https://www.ahri.com.au/resources/ahriassist/>

The Australian HR Institute (AHRI) is the professional body for Human Resources in Australia. Employers can access various resources and publications from this site on all Human Resources related topics including coaching, leadership, employee health and wellbeing, learning and development etc.

8.5 www.fairwork.gov.au

The Fair Work Ombudsmen website contains information about the National Workplace relations system operating in Australia. It provides templates, online training courses, information on pay, leave, access to awards and agreements. Employers and employees can access free services including help to resolve workplace issues.

