

Critical Reflection in Practice

A simple guide to support family day care educators

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD

QA1 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM & PRACTICE QA2 CHILDREN'S HEALTH & SAFETY QA3 PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT QA4 STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS
QA5 RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN QA6 COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES QA7 GOVERNANCE & LEADERSHIP

EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK

SECURE, RESPECTFUL & RECIPROCAL RELATIONSHIPS • PARTNERSHIPS • HIGH EXPECTATIONS & EQUITY
• RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY • ONGOING LEARNING & REFLECTIVE PRACTICE



What is critical reflection?

It is an ongoing, dynamic process of thinking honestly, deeply and critically, on a regular basis, about all aspects of our practice as professional educators. It is a learned skill that helps you to think more purposefully and enriches your decision making.

Through the critical reflection process you ask yourself important questions about:

- what has happened
- children's learning and development in relation to the approved learning frameworks
- your knowledge and practices as a professional educator
- your learning program and learning environment
- your interactions with children, their families and the wider community.

What should frame the critical reflection process?

The process of critical reflection should occur within the context of the frameworks governing early childhood education and care in Australia:

- The National Quality Framework (NQF) which specifies a national approach to regulation, assessment and quality improvement. The NQF includes National Quality Standards (NQS) that set benchmarks in quality practice through 7 Quality Areas, 15 Standards and 40 Elements. NQS Element 1.3.2 explicitly states:

“Critical reflection on children's learning and development, both as individuals and in groups, drives program planning and implementation.”

- The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) which is the national early childhood education curriculum document.

“The EYLF includes ongoing learning and reflective practice as one of its five key principles to guide effective practice.”

How do you demonstrate evidence of critical reflection?

It is important to document why and how you made decisions and changes as a result of your critical reflections. You can document in various ways. For example:

- in the learning program itself
- in a reflective journal or daily diary
- in minutes of team meetings.

Documenting the critical reflection process provides the groundwork for turning reflection into action!



Scan here for practical tips and ideas on how to use this guide to critical reflection.