Reflection is an integral part of teachers’ ongoing decision making. It plays a vital role in sustaining and enhancing professional practice and learning. Engaging partners in the process helps teachers to ensure that the learning program reflects the perspectives of children, parents/carers and colleagues.

Why engage partners in reflection?

When teachers engage children in reflecting on learning, they gain insights into children’s thinking, feelings, ideas, interests and intentions that help them to enhance all children’s learning and development. Engaging parents/carers and families enables teachers to incorporate their hopes, expectations and priorities for their children’s learning. When educators, support personnel and teachers reflect together as a team, opportunities arise to value diverse expertise, celebrate successes and identify new possibilities for practice.

Suggested strategies for involving partners in reflection

When reflecting with children:

- model ways to talk about what they are learning
- model ways to talk about how they are learning
- ask specific questions to help them to talk about their learning
- use photographs, drawings or diagrams to help them talk about what they did and how they did it
- encourage them to share their learning with peers or parents/carers, e.g. by drawing, painting, talking or roleplaying.

When reflecting with parents/carers:

- discuss their hopes, expectations and priorities for their child (when they start kindergarten and throughout the year)
- identify ways to help them feel that they belong and can engage actively in the learning program
- engage in informal conversations to gather their perceptions of their child’s ongoing learning
- use focused conversations or written feedback processes to seek their opinions about particular aspects of the kindergarten program.
When reflecting with colleagues:

- seek out formal professional development opportunities
- engage in focused staff discussions
- collaborate to address concerns, issues and identify new possibilities
- engage in action learning projects
- network with other early years colleagues (face-to-face or online, both within and outside your service)
- access and engage critically with current professional readings
- engage with broader policies and initiatives related to early years education.

Focus questions

Examine the assumptions and values you hold that may influence how you involve partners in reflection. Consider:

- your views about the potential benefits to children’s learning that can come from involving partners in reflection
- your views about parents'/carers’, children’s and colleagues’ roles or abilities to contribute to reflection
- assumptions about your role and capacity to support collaborative reflection.

Complete the following two tasks to identify and plan ways to engage partners in reflection.
# Involving partners in reflection

1. List current strategies you use to involve partners in reflection.

2. Identify additional or different strategies, and their purpose, that you could use to more effectively involve different partners in reflection.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current strategies for involving ...</th>
<th>Additional or different strategies and their purpose</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>children</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>parents/carers</td>
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<tr>
<td>colleagues</td>
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</table>
### Action plan: Promoting reflection with partners

1. Select one or more of the strategies you outlined in the previous task that you wish to use or develop to engage one or more partners in reflection.

2. List the actions you will take and a timeline to help you achieve this plan. Include specific steps, dates/targets and any support you will need.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy/s</th>
<th>Actions and timeline</th>
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