

Module 3: Areas of Early Learning

We have already introduced and discussed different aspects of the Framework to date. This module focuses specifically on Section 3 of the BC Early Learning Framework. You will become familiar with the areas of early learning and with what it means for an educator to engage with a common framework.

Areas of Early Learning

We will explore the meanings embedded in each of the goals and consider what are possible multiple meanings for each of these goals. It is also important to understand that the goals are not described out of context, in an abstract form. Rather they should be situated within examples of practice. Therefore you will analyze situations that happen at your centers and how you can relate these to the Framework's goals.

The four areas in the framework

- Well-being and Belonging
- Exploration and Creativity
- Languages and Literacies
- Social Responsibility and Diversity

Well-being and Belonging

Learning Goals

To promote a sense of well-being and belonging, adults provide an environment where young children can:

- feel safe and respected
- learn ways to keep themselves healthy, including nourishment, sleep & physical activity
- feel confidence in and in control of their bodies
- understand and follow routines
- feel a sense of security, self-respect and self-regulation

To promote a sense of well-being and belonging, adults provide an environment where young children can:

- express a sense of well-being
- recognize, accept, and express a wide range of emotions, thoughts and views
- adapt to and enjoy experiences of change, surprise and uncertainty
- feel valued and explore their own strategies for learning
- build healthy relationships with both adults and children

“A sense of well-being and belonging is vital to children as they learn about and explore the world around them. In the first years of life, children develop increasing mastery over their bodies and daily routines, supporting health and well-being over their lifespan and providing them with a sense of place - a feeling of being grounded in their immediate environment, their communities, their culture, and the wider world. This confidence is essential to children as they begin to explore their creative capacities as family members, friends, thinkers, citizens, and stewards of the natural environment.” (British Columbia Early Learning Framework, p. 18).

Think about:

- How are well-being and belonging currently reflected in my practice?
- What can I provide that makes room for a broad range of abilities?
- How can I encourage the acceptance of diversity between the children themselves?
- What can I do to bring my practice more in line with the framework’s description of well-being and belonging and its learning goals?
- How can I know if well-being and belonging and its goals are evident in my program? At the highest level, what can I do to make this area of early learning more explicit in my practice?
- How can I promote a discussion of well-being and belonging in my practice, with the families and communities?
- How have I reflected upon the ‘questions to consider’ included in the framework for well-being and belonging?

Exploration and Creativity

Learning Goals

To promote exploration and creativity, adults provide an environment where young children can:

- explore the world using their bodies and all their senses
- actively explore, think and reason
- build, create and design using different materials and techniques
- identify and try possible solutions to problems in meaningful contexts and situations
- be creative and expressive in a variety of ways
- develop a sense of wonder for natural environments
- express a zest for living and learning

Think about:

- How is exploration and creativity currently reflected in my practice?
- What can I do to bring my practice more in line with the Framework's description of exploration and creativity and its learning goals?
- How can I know if exploration and creativity and its goals are evident in my program in a way that meets diverse needs? What can I do to make this area of early learning more explicit in my practice?
- How can I promote a discussion of exploration and creativity in my practice, with the families and communities?
- How have I reflected upon the 'Questions to Consider' included in the framework for exploration and creativity?

Language and Literacies

Learning Goals

To promote the development of languages and literacies, adults provide an environment where young children can:

- communicate thoughts and experiences creatively using many different forms of expression
- develop diverse language abilities and the capacity to communicate with others in many ways
- be curious about vocabulary, concepts, and written language
- engage in sound and word play
- use numbers, measurement, and form in meaningful contexts
- experience the stories and symbols of their own and other cultures
- express their own points of view and reflect on others' views

Think about:

- How are languages and literacies currently reflected in my practice?
- What can I do to bring my practice more in line with the Framework's description of languages and literacies and its learning goals, including the Aboriginal specific provisions?
- How can I know if languages and literacies and the goals are evident in my program?
- What can I do to make this area of early learning more explicit in my practice?

- How can I promote a discussion of languages and literacies in my practice, and with the families and communities?
- How have I reflected upon the Questions to Consider included in the Framework for languages and literacies?
- For Aboriginal children in my program, how have I appropriately recognized, honoured and supported the children’s ancestral languages?
- How have I promoted discussions with Aboriginal parents/families about their Aboriginal language goals for their children?
- How might those goals be supported through my program?
- Have I identified and consulted with the appropriate First Peoples language and literacies experts, including Elders, Big House Speakers, language speakers, language teachers and linguists, and have I incorporated their recommendations into my program?
- How have I explored Aboriginal language and literacies “best and promising practices” from other jurisdictions (e.g. the Maori Kohanga Reo and Native Hawaiian language nests, as well as B.C. First Nations communities that have created language nests based upon these models)?
- How have I incorporated these practices into my program?

Social Responsibility and Diversity

Learning Goals

To promote social responsibility and respect for diversity, adults provide an environment where young children can:

- explore and learn about family, community and the wider world
- express a positive regard for others and respect for self, others, and property
- participate in the making, following, and re-working of rules, rituals, and procedures in their everyday world
- understand fairness both for themselves and others
- begin to recognize discrimination and inequity and to respond appropriately
- learn to appreciate and celebrate diversity understand that all persons have value; accept and welcome individual differences
- understand how their own actions may affect nature and the planet

Think about:

- How are social responsibility and diversity currently reflected in my practice?
- What can I do to bring my practice more in line with the Framework's description of social responsibility and diversity and its learning goals, including the Aboriginal-specific provisions?
- How can I know if social responsibility and diversity and its goals are evident in my program?
- What can I do to make this area of early learning more explicit in my practice?
- How can I promote a discussion of social responsibility and diversity in my practice, and with families and communities?
- How have I reflected upon the Questions to Consider included in the Framework for social responsibility and diversity?
- Have I appropriately accommodated the unique circumstances of Aboriginal children with respect to social responsibility and diversity?

How do the four areas relate?

Think about:

We can't perceive them or view them in isolation. Remember the following statement included in the Framework: "It is important to note that the areas of early learning are all inter-related: learning in one area is likely to support learning in all three other areas. As such, the learning goals outlined in each section, and the questions to consider in designing environments to support them, overlap and strengthen one another."

We are challenging you to think about the Early Learning Framework as something that can be reflected on and can grow and be adapted to your learning centre environment.

Finished Module 3

Next, please complete the questionnaire for Module 3. In the questionnaire you will be asked to answer the following question. From the Framework:

"This framework recognizes that there are no pre-set ways to promote the four areas of early learning. Many factors, including the children's setting, caregivers, language, culture, heritage, religion, temperament, and abilities, shape the experiences that support early learning."

1. How do we create a process that would allow us to engage with the children as opposed to making the children fit the Framework?

Please complete the Questionnaire before proceeding to Module 4.