

Making choices and decisions and developing resilience

Resource booklet for families



This resource booklet has been designed to accompany the learning from home resources designed for teachers. Each booklet covers a different learning area and is designed to be used by families in the home so they can offer play experiences that will support their child's learning in this area. It also unpacks some of the learning that will happen.

The learning outcome that links to this resource booklet is:

Learning Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity

- Children have control over themselves and the choices that they make.

The learning concepts covered in this resource are:

- Right to make choices and decisions
- Persistence

As children grow, they become more independent and understand that they have control over themselves and the choices they make. They learn that their decisions effect themselves and others. Things don't always go their way and you can't always protect them, but you can help them to identify, express and manage their emotions. Having the ability to cope with ups and downs and bounce back from challenges builds children's confidence and resilience and helps them to manage greater responsibilities later in life.

Families are encouraged to investigate and explore play experiences incorporating local Aboriginal history and culture, when and where appropriate.

Autonomy – making choices and decisions independently

When your child makes his or her own choices, they are thinking and problem solving. Making simple choices at home helps to build their self-esteem and develop a sense of autonomy.

Play experiences

- Offer your child the opportunity to make their own choices about things which affect them such as what they might eat and when, which activity they want to participate in and whether they want to do it with a sibling or independently.
- Allow your child to make decisions throughout the day including what to wear, the order in which certain daily tasks will be done, or which book they want to read. Listen to their ideas and opinions and follow their lead when possible.
- Provide plenty of opportunities for free play such as digging in the garden, building with blocks, playing with teddies or action figures, dressing up for role-play or painting on blank paper. Allow your child to choose how long they spend playing where possible.

- Assign your child tasks such as cooking from a recipe, gardening or cleaning up after the family pet. These tasks help them feel responsible and learn from their actions, struggles and successes. Complete tasks with your child until they are ready to do them on their own.

Questions to support your child's learning

- Encourage your child's interests and abilities and support them to make decisions where possible. Ask questions like: What do you think? What do you want to do? How can we do this differently today?
- Think about different times in the day you could allow your child to make decisions. Ask them what they would like for dinner and which local supermarket you should visit. Provide choices which will be meaningful to your child and acceptable to you.
- Ask them what they know about areas of interest and what they would like to find out more about. Take their lead and research their interest areas by reading books or looking for information on the internet.

What will your child learn?

- Understand they have control over themselves and the choices they make
- Independence and responsibility
- Self-confidence
- Problem solving skills
- Responsibility for the choices they make
- What they need to do to care for themselves and for others around them.

Resilience

There are many opportunities to support your child's achievements and disappointments, to ensure they feel pride and confidence when things go their way and can deal with consequences when they don't. This helps build their resilience to deal with difficulties that are a part of everyday life.

Play experiences

- Create something like a group collage with your child or make moon sand or playdough together. Talk about what colour to use and what role you will have in the group task. Group experiences can help your child learn how to work in a team and share decision making.
- Set up opportunities for your child to have ownership of an important role such as setting the table or putting away the dishes. Show an interest in how

your child completes the task and talk about why that job is useful. If they don't complete the task talk to them about the impact it has on the family.

- Play a range of board games such as snakes and ladders, and card games such as snap or memory. Talk about the rules of different games and draw their attention to the need to take turns, share materials and express emotions in appropriate ways. Talk about winning and losing and how this makes them feel. Allow your child to lose as this builds their capacity to bounce back from tricky situations and self-regulate.
- Encourage your child to try things on their own, while providing safe boundaries and being there if they need you. For example, climbing a challenging piece of playground equipment or walking independently to the neighbour's house to deliver something for you. Consider their age, maturity and your own comfort level when making decisions. This helps them to think independently and solve any problems which may arise.

Questions to support your child's learning

- Model 'healthy thinking' when facing challenges of your own. You can do this by thanking other people for their support or saying things like "Things will get better soon", "I can cope with this".
- Model calm and rational problem-solving when something doesn't go as expected. Talk out loud the thought process you are having in solving a problem, for example "that didn't work, I will try it this way".
- Hold back and see if your child can fix their own problems or disagreements and be ready to step in when they need support.
- Ask open ended questions to help children think about their emotions and articulate their feelings such as: 'What's the best thing that happened today?', "What was the hardest thing about today?"
- Offer praise and encouragement for example: 'You were great at waiting for your turn', or 'I liked the way that you congratulated your brother when he won'.

What will your child learn?

- Build confidence and persistence through active engagement in play
- Engage in new experiences and persist when faced with challenges
- Develop the skills needed to overcome disappointment or challenging situations and move forward
- Celebrate their individual achievements and the achievements of others
- Things don't always go their way