

LEAPS

learning eating active play sleep

Physical activity and cultural diversity



One of the rights recognised by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is the right to play. Participating in play and physical activity are universal even though communities are diverse.

This diversity needs to be recognised and appreciated, as there is no “one size fits all” approach to working with children from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities. Children come from different backgrounds with different experiences and interests. Engaging and working in partnership with parents, grandparents and caregivers and learning about their culture, songs, stories and dances will enrich children’s physical activity experiences.

Here are some suggestions that promote inclusion;

- Find out if there are clothing requirements or body modesty issues that may affect participation and modify activities so that all children can be included.
- Talk to parents about what play and being active means in their country and culture.
- Invite parents, grandparents, caregivers or community representatives to share some games and physical activities.
- Talk to Elders from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities about activities specific to their community.
- Hear stories from different cultures and relate these to physical activity
- Get to know local community groups and/or Indigenous workers in community or charitable organisations, to invite them to share ideas to promote inclusion.
- Have children make toys and game equipment which are used in different cultural activities.
- Learn different dances- traditional and modern. Ask parents to bring in a variety of music, instruments or play items.
- Be aware of physical activities that occur at different special times of the year such as Easter Egg Hunts. Make sure that children who do not celebrate Easter still have the opportunity to run around and hunt for other little treasures.
- Find a local interpreter service if you need it. Search out people in your local area who can provide Cultural Competency Training for your staff.
- Attend any cultural festivals in your local area.
- Be flexible with times when dealing with communities as sometimes important community issues or funerals will mean that they cannot make the time you have scheduled.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

“All children, no matter what their race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, or where they were born or who they were born to ... have the right to develop physically and spiritually in a healthy and normal way, free and with dignity”

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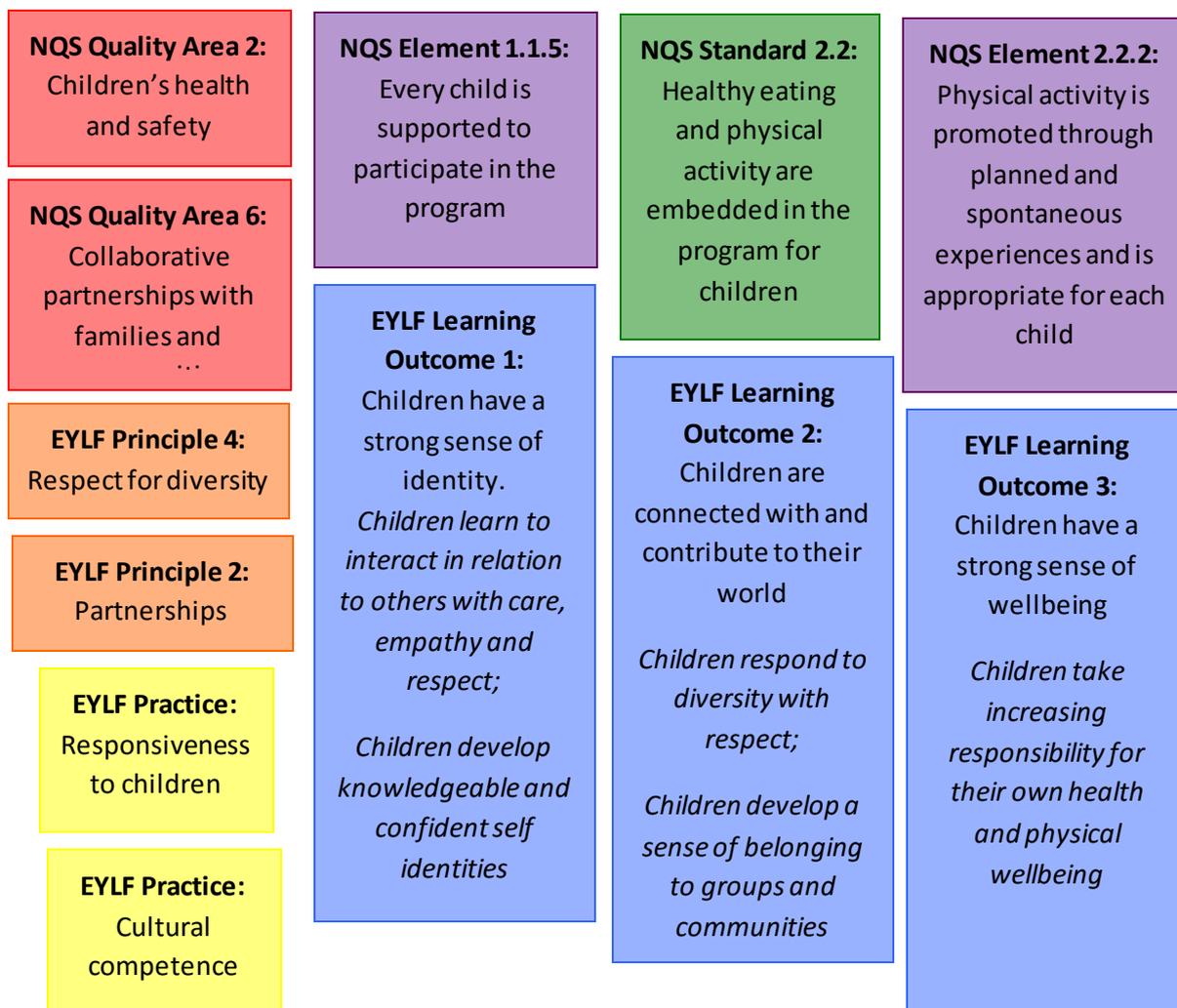
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Through participating in culturally diverse games and activities children learn to respect diversity and difference and appreciate it as a strength in our society.

Links to the National Quality Standard (NQS) and the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)



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Useful Resources:

- Australian Sports Commission: Yulunga*: Traditional Indigenous Games is a activity resource of over 100 traditional Indigenous games created to provide all Australians with an opportunity to learn about, appreciate and experience aspects of Indigenous culture.
http://www.ausport.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0017/402191/SP_31864_TIG_resource_FINAL.pdf
- The Centre for Culture, Ethnicity & Health provide a series of fact sheets on cultural competence:
<http://www.ceh.org.au/culturalcompetence>
- Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland provides a series of Policy Fact Sheets. The one on Early Childhood Development provides tips for staff in Early Childhood settings:
<http://www.eccq.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/Fact-Sheet-5-Early-childhood-development.pdf>
- Multicultural Development Association Universal Access to Early Childhood Education for Children from CALD backgrounds options paper was based on extensive community consultation, especially from refugee background and new migrants. <https://mdaltd.org.au/download/universal-access-to-early-childhood-education-for-children-from-cald-backgrounds-options-for-consideration-2012-13/>

References:

UNICEF (1996). United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Retrieved from: <http://www.unicef.org.au/Upload/UNICEF/Media/Our%20work/childfriendlycrc.pdf>

Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (2013). *Guide to the National Quality Standard*. Retrieved from: <http://www.acecqa.gov.au/national-quality-framework/the-national-quality-standard>

Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations (2009). *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*. Retrieved from: <https://www.education.gov.au/early-years-learning-framework>