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Originally from the UK, my passion and enthusiasm for driving quality outcomes for children led to 13 years' experience working across Education, Inclusion, Community and Early Years settings in three different countries. My professional philosophy helps me in my approach to lead staff teams and work collaboratively with families and communities to improve quality outcomes for children. It now finds me as director of YMCAWA Port Hedland Early Learning Centre, a not-for-profit remote LDC facility in WA for children aged six weeks to five years. We believe every child is unique, capable and curious and work together to create safe and inclusive environments which are based on child interests. We conduct ourselves alongside the four core values of Honesty, Respect, Responsibility and Caring to promote Early Years Education and Care, resulting in a successful transition to school.

For me, international treaties such as the UNCROC and legislative requirements such as the NQF are not tools to be only referred to in the event of an impending assessment and rating process, or tools to be used only by management. Practitioners who are truly passionate and dedicated to improving quality outcomes for children should know, live and breathe these documents. All children, regardless of background, age, disability, nationality, religion or gender are uniquely capable, and as educators we should continually strive to improve quality with them. The EYLF and NQS are requirements to be celebrated in early education and care settings as they support quality improvement and in several cases help identify practices we all do effectively every day as strengths!

Inspired by the Reggio Emilia approach to learning, I use the NQF to support and encourage educators to drive their own quality practices, enabling them to be co-learners and collaborators with each child. Educators are supported with their professional development and practice in a number of ways, such as the provision of access to online PDs, training sessions, ongoing role modelling and daily communication around quality practice, and an in-depth probation/appraisal process. Observation of practice and professional development reviews alongside the educators are conducted by myself and the pedagogical leader, where clear targets are mutually agreed and set to ensure quality provision is a continuing practice. Educators in turn then role model these practices to their colleagues and to children, which in turn creates a number of positive outcomes. For example, our respectful, reciprocal and responsive dialogues with children and families help us form collaborative partnerships which enable children to self-direct their own learning!

The development and review of our Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) helps us to further drive quality practice. We share our QIP with families and ask for their feedback on our practices through a range of different media, taking into account barriers such as English as an additional language and family access to technology. The regular meetings which take place between the director and educators to celebrate what is working well and to strategise ideas for further quality improvement and our monthly staff meetings enable the EYLF to be explored on a regular basis. For example, the agenda at staff meetings is broken down into the seven National Quality Standards. These then become open topics for review and reflection, and the improvements are then added to our QIP. Most importantly, however, we ask children to share their thoughts and feelings with us on a daily basis to promote the principles, practices and learning outcomes in the EYLF and to continually drive child-led quality!

The underlying values of the NQF are supported by the principles underpinning the EYLF and the five Learning Outcomes. These provide educators with valuable resources against which children's

development can be identified. Supporting the educators to use the EYLF and to follow our own YMCA approach to learning then enables them to document this development through observations. The critical reflection of these observations enables extension of learning and supports each child's future development. The EYLF planning cycle is broken down into Question, Plan, Act and Reflect. It's designed to show programming doesn't have to be difficult and can be so rewarding—keep it simple, make it effective—and basing it on the expressed needs of the child is the key!

Rome was not built in a day! Quality practices take time and effort to build. However, there is a lot of support to help drive Quality. The support I gained from understanding all aspects of the NQF has helped drive my own professional and quality practice. My own experience of the assessment and ratings process was really positive and I found it to be an excellent opportunity to celebrate strengths within the centre and also focus on areas and formulate exciting plans for continuing quality improvement. I was delighted when our centre recently achieved an overall rating of 'exceeding' the National Quality Standards.

Published 2017