

# 4 SECRETS TO SETTING UP A REALISTIC PLANNING CYCLE...

SO YOU CAN CONFIDENTLY DOCUMENT A  
MEANINGFUL PLAY-BASED PROGRAM

*(Without writing more than you need to, following complicated documentation steps or constantly second-guessing yourself).*



PRESENTED BY  
JODIE CLARKE



THE  
EMPOWERED  
EDUCATOR





# IN THIS WEBINAR...

Shall we get started? During this workshop I'm going to show you how you CAN become the early childhood educator who understands the purpose of each step of the planning cycle, why we need to follow them and how to save yourself time by using the tools that work best with your strengths & service type.

...and that means you will no longer need to feel uncertain or confused about how you can use this knowledge to write your program and support a child's learning journey in the early years.



**THE  
EMPOWERED  
EDUCATOR**

BY JODIE CLARKE



# FIRST - LET'S PARTY WITH POST IT NOTES!

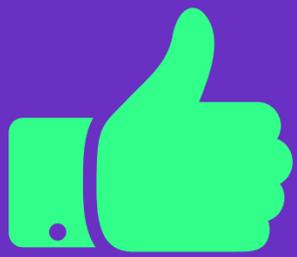
To start this workshop I want to walk you through a simple (and usually fun) exercise you can do on your own or together with other educators - this is actually perfect for the beginning of a team meeting.

So grab your pen and take some notes then make sure you give my Planning Cycle Post It Party a try when this workshop is over (and don't let anyone tell you that you can't party on your own!).



**HERE'S WHAT  
YOU DO...**

**This will help you to visualise each step of the planning cycle and decide if what you are already doing is enough, confirm if you are on the right track then determine if you can realistically sustain this current documentation process or if, perhaps, you need to make some changes in some areas of the cycle.**



**INTERESTING +  
INTERACTIVE**

## “The Empowered Ed 30 Minute Planning Cycle Post-it Party”

How will you start? You are simply going to grab a sharpie, write down each step of the planning cycle onto a sticky note and then stick to a window or wall.

Keep it simple - I'll give you some prompts to use on the next slide so there is no excuse to procrastinate on getting started. I'm going to teach you how to do it in 5 minutes right now!



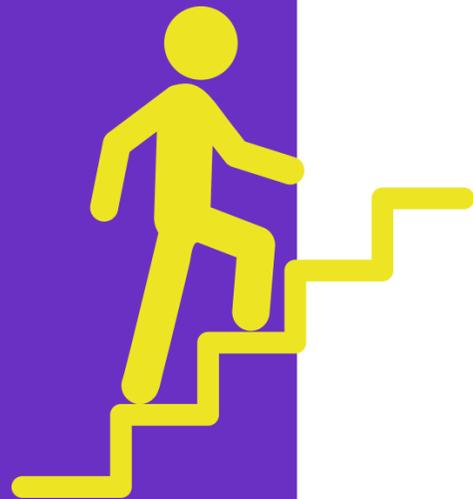
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# PLANNING CYCLE STICKY NOTE PROMPTS

1. Observing & Communicating
2. Goal Setting & Reflecting
3. Looking Forward & Planning Ahead
4. Extending & Engaging
5. Evaluating & Linking

# PLANNING CYCLE PARTY STEPS



- 1. Grab a few packs of post-it notes & your fav sharpie or pen.**
- 2. Set a timer for 20 minutes max then swap out the Wiggles playlist for your favourite motivation music and turn that volume up.**
- 3. Write down each planning cycle step on a separate sticky note then add to the top of a wall, door, board or window.**



**Now let loose with your thoughts and write down every piece of paperwork, documentation, assessment, programming, communicating, reflecting and engaging that you do on a daily or weekly basis.**

**Use a separate sticky note for each one you think of.**



**Use a separate sticky note for each one you think of then sort and stick under each prompt to form columns.**

**There will undoubtedly be some crossover so you can write duplicate sticky notes if you feel it would be helpful to visualise those things across more than one planning cycle prompt column.**

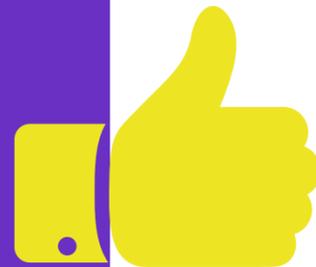
# WHAT DOES THE WALL TELL YOU?

- When the timer goes off it's pens down and time to stand back to review your sticky note wall.
- Can you see any steps that you thought you had covered but now realise you need to improve or change?
- Can you see any steps where perhaps you are documenting or trying to include too much?
- Can you see a clear step by step process that leads you from one step to the next - something you would feel confident repeating each week or month?

**WOULD THIS BE  
HELPFUL?**

**So easy right? Reflecting on what you are already doing in terms of your work doesn't need to be boring.**

**Give me a thumbs up in the comments if you plan on giving this Planning Cycle Post It Party a go...**



**SAVE TIME  
STEP BY STEP**



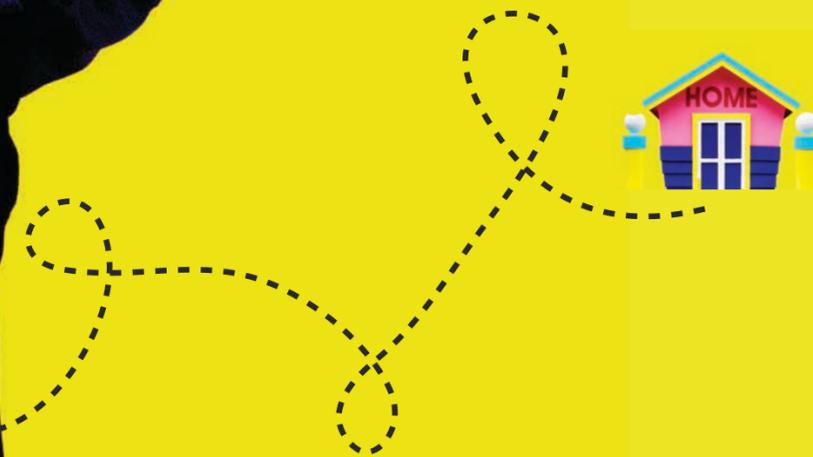
## **AWESOME!**

**Even though it is a super simple exercise, I encourage you to give it a go because when you use it with all of the information you take from this workshop it will help you to identify where to focus your attention first as you build your cycle framework...then confidently take the actions you need to get there faster by following your own step by step process.**

....I often took children's observations home on a Friday in my trusty little filing box - each card plastered with a colourful dot to tell me who I was meant to be observing this week.



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...write them down somewhere  
for some reason.



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JODIE CLARKE



...Better put the coloured dots and arrows on the program so the parents can see how everything that has taken me hours to complete before this stage now links together to support their child's learning.

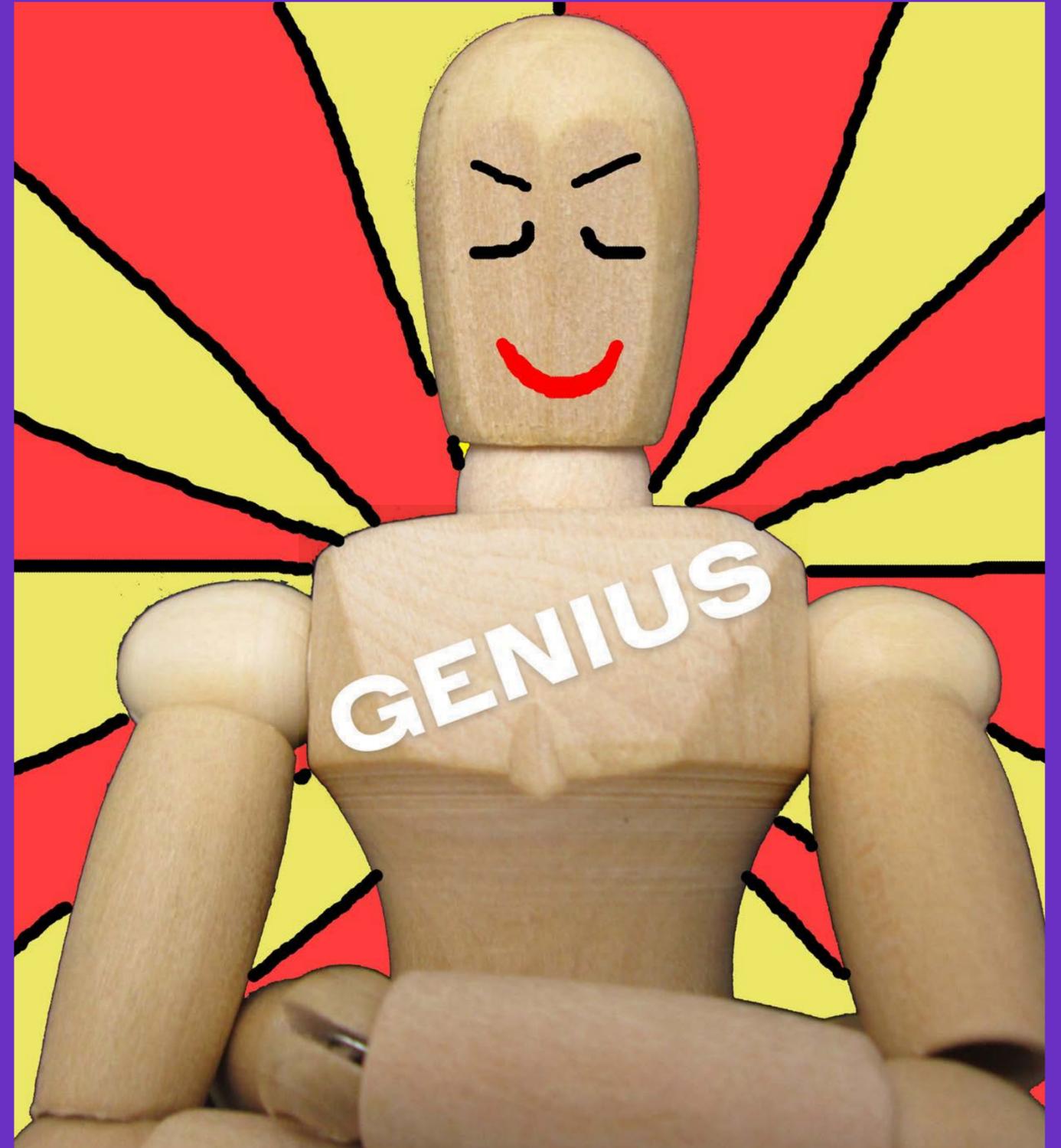


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...I was sure they would love to stop and read it - it was a darn masterpiece!



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JODIE CLARKE



...Nope, no one even glanced at it.  
That frustrated me for sure - it was  
up there on display for them after  
all....didn't they want to know what  
their child was doing all day?



*Anyone would think talking to me and  
seeing a happy child each day was  
enough for them somehow?*



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...I needed to somehow find a balance because this whole childcare thing wasn't working out how I thought it would... and why was there still so much cleaning?



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...They also prioritized and didn't overthink everything like I had been - sound familiar?



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JODIE CLARKE



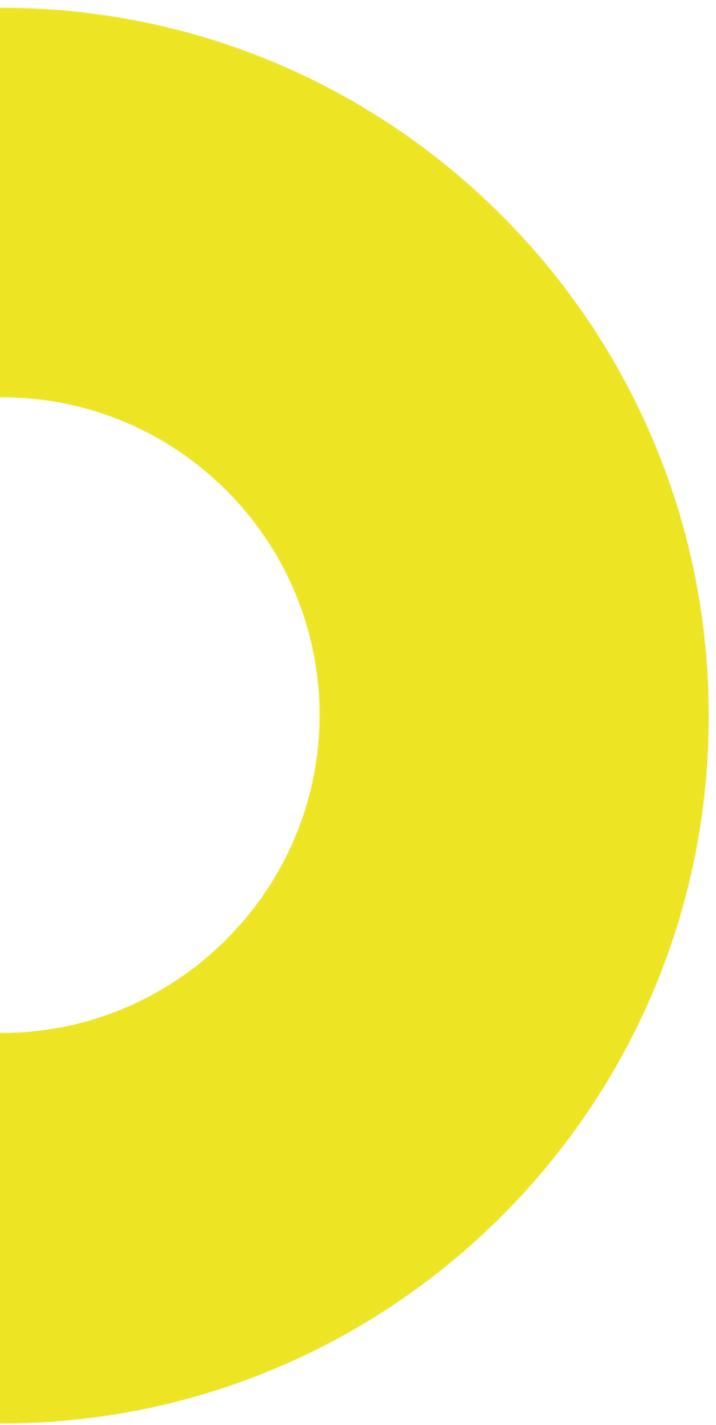
**...I'd be lying if I said it  
all came together for  
me in one month....**



**...I STILL DO IT  
TO THIS DAY.**

**I get out a pencil and paper &  
I draw my steps out.  
I make them visual.  
I go back to basics and cut out  
the unnecessary.**





...Nowadays whenever educators ask me for guidance with how to make their planning cycle 'easier' that's what I tell them to do.

## **NO, NOT TO DRINK WINE.**

To break down the cycle into a visual process that can be followed on autopilot step by step, day after day, month after month.



**THEN I ASK IF THEY  
UNDERSTAND WHY  
WE DO THESE  
PLANNING STEPS.**



I enquire if they confidently know **HOW** to use their current observation templates, forward planning system, program format and communication tools effectively and efficiently to meet those planning steps.

Child Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Observation Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Educator: \_\_\_\_\_



What story do the photos tell us?

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Child Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Observation Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Educator: \_\_\_\_\_



The Learning Journey

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Finally, I ask if there are any parts of their process they could actually cut out instead of adding in.

**What do you think it would it feel like to have a shorter but more meaningful and useful planning cycle to follow?**



One that actually collected information that could be used to write the majority of next week's program for you.

That's exactly what I started doing and it worked, so I know other educators can get there too.



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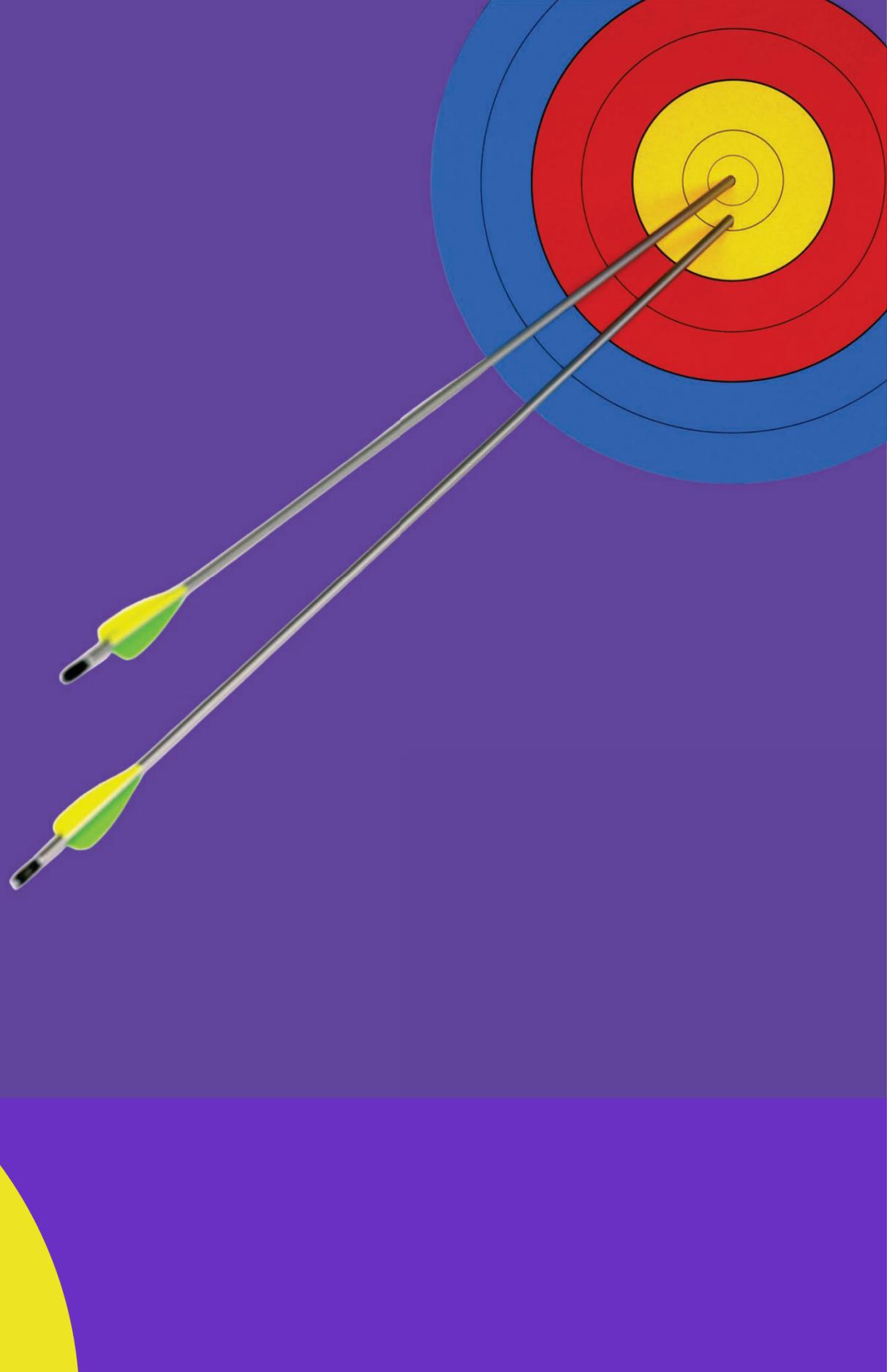


**When you write a program based on the documentation cycle that YOU have put together you'll find you approach this step with more confidence and don't get flustered trying to think of something for 'where to next'.**

**Knowing how to recognise what works for you and what doesn't and how to make changes or cut things out if needed as your experience grows is important. That's why we start with the basics.**



**I know it might seem hard to imagine you can put everything together in a way that works for you, but stick with me because I'm about to show you how this can indeed become your reality.**



Understanding the purpose of the planning cycle and setting up a framework process that links and flows together is the single most effective and time efficient way for you to document a meaningful play based program and support a child's learning journey...it also means no more second guessing yourself.

# CYCLE CONFIDENCE BOOSTER

## SECRET #1 - MAKE IT VISUAL

Illustrate and define each step of the planning cycle by using visual learning aids and outside the 'lecture' box thinking.





# VISUAL LEARNING ISN'T JUST FOR CHILDREN...

Visual learning is a type of learning style in which we use images, graphics, colours and maps to communicate ideas, concepts and thoughts.

Many adults and children must SEE new information in order to successfully learn and retain it.



**Visual learning helps you to RETAIN information for a longer period of time as it was captured in your memory through images.**



**Visual Learning helps leaders and mentors to COMMUNICATE key concepts succinctly.**



**Visual Learning helps to ENGAGE & MOTIVATE, whereas text and talking can often seem boring or monotonous...so there is a greater tendency to tune out and only learn passively instead of actively.**

**Visual learning methods  
can BOOST an  
educator's confidence  
and performance.**



# WHY IS THIS RELEVANT TO EDUCATORS?

This can be especially relevant when trying to explain the steps of the planning cycle - an educator might be able to name the steps and do paperwork for that step...

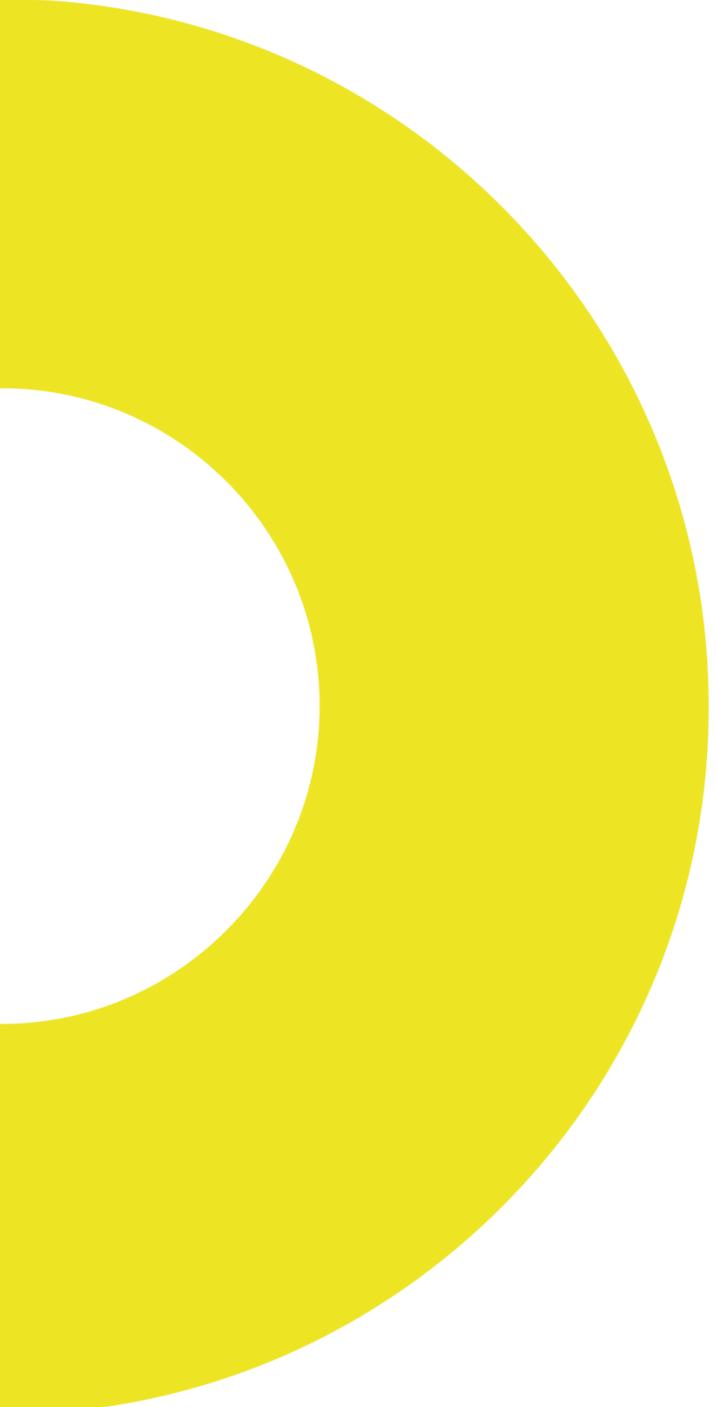
...but it doesn't mean they understand how they link together, what types of information they need to collect or even what tools and strategies to use.





**This causes frustration and can be a waste of time for both educator and leader as the *real purpose of the planning cycle is lost* because the focus becomes the 'bits and pieces' rather than *seeing and understanding the process as a whole.***

...

A large yellow circular graphic on the left side of the slide, consisting of a thick yellow ring with a white circle in the center.

## Visual Strategies for Leaders

In the following slides I'm going to share some of the successful methods and strategies I have used over the years to help me explain the planning cycle process to educators...



# VISUAL STRATEGIES FOR LEADERS

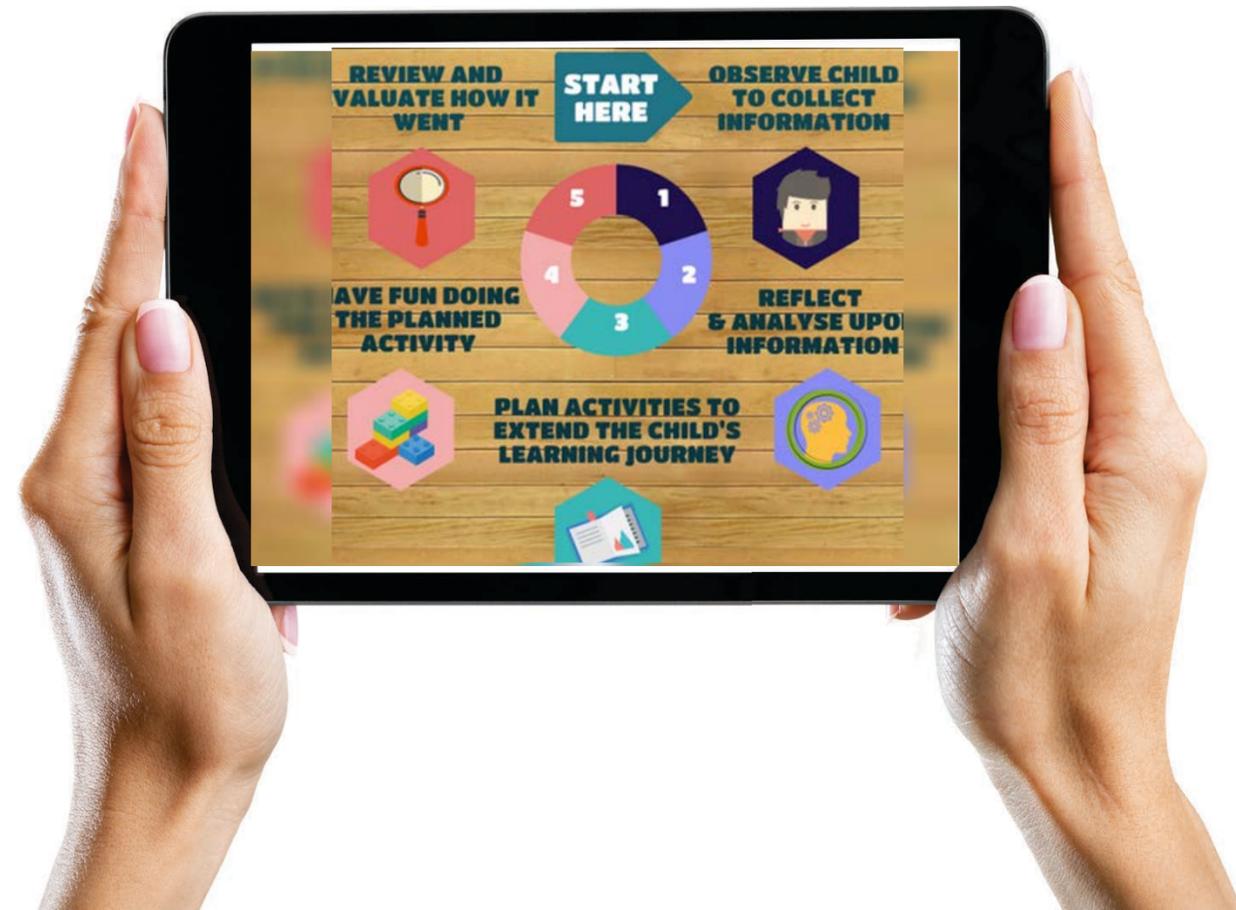


**Use videos, simple graphics and still images in presentations instead of just dot points.**



# VISUAL STRATEGIES FOR LEADERS

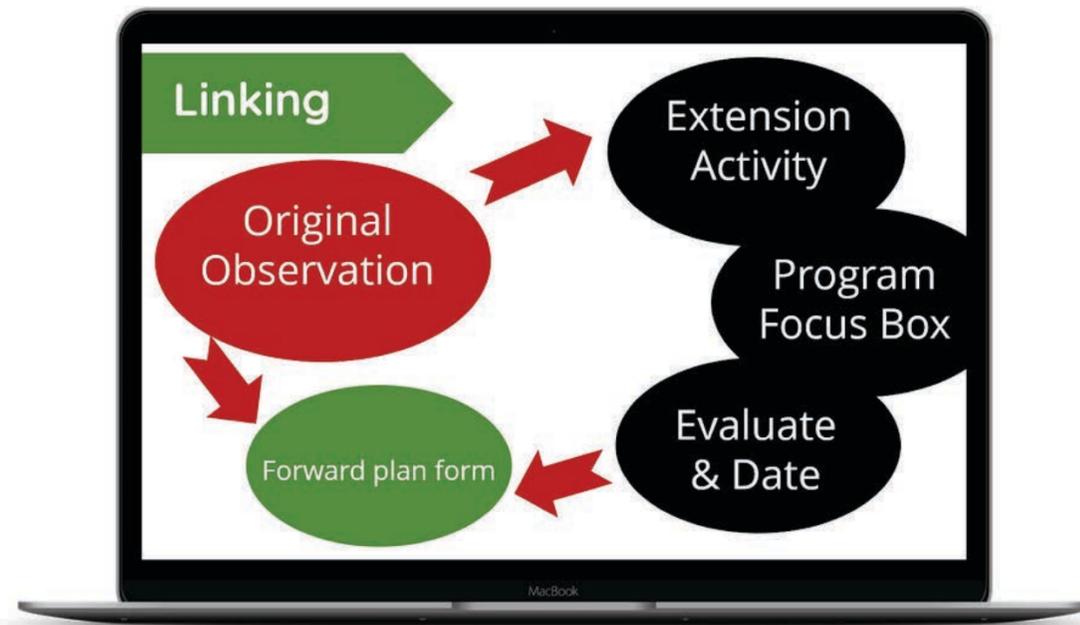
Draw images or create infographics for each step - ensure they are colourful, well spaced and simple to understand at a glance.





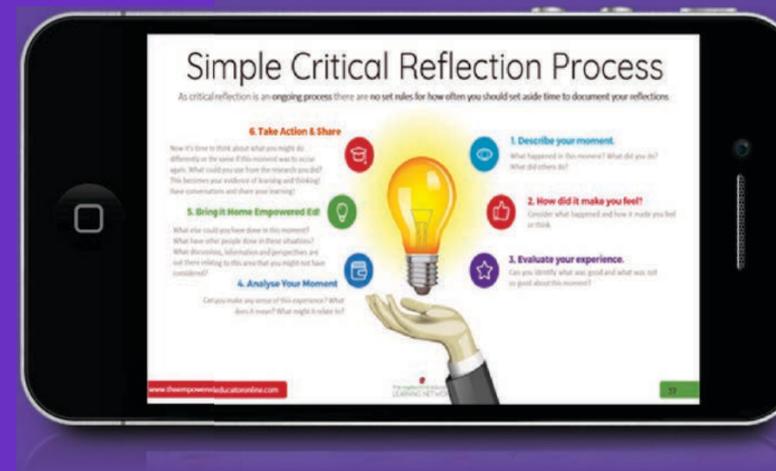
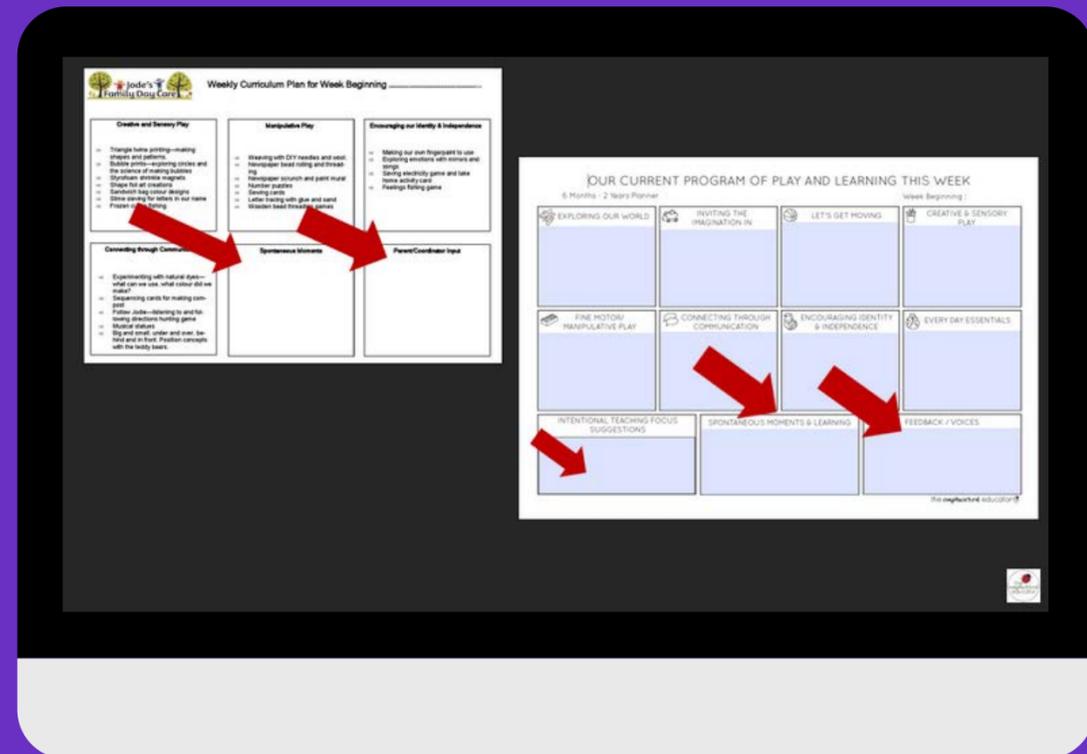
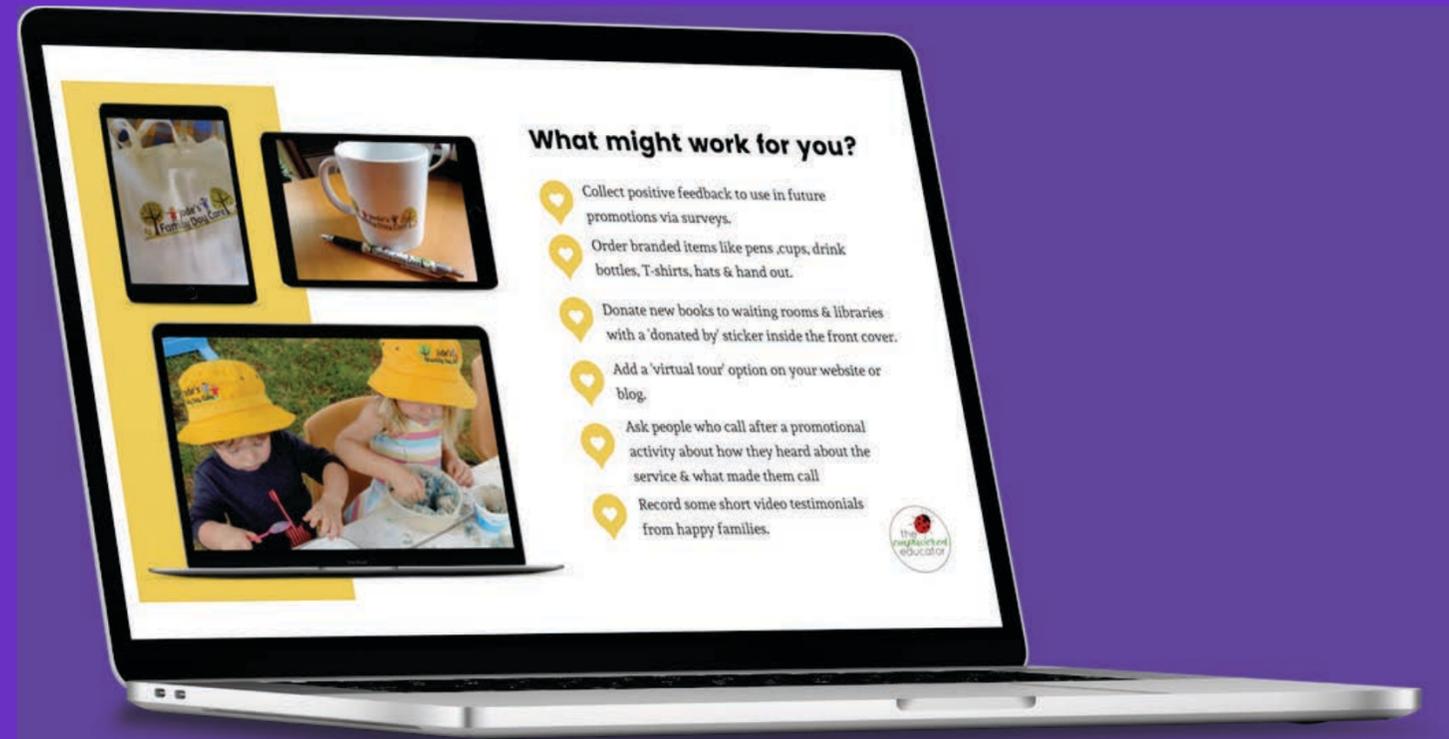
# VISUAL STRATEGIES FOR LEADERS

Use colour themes and interesting images in any presentation and handouts that correspond to cycle steps and linger in the memory.



A screenshot of a software window titled 'Basic Program'. The window has a purple header and a toolbar with various icons. Below the toolbar is a green bar labeled 'Awesome Module (Running)'. Underneath is a red arrow pointing right with the text 'Breaking down the steps'. Below this are four cartoon children holding white signs. The signs contain the following text from left to right: 'Observations', 'Reflection &amp; Analysis', 'Forward Plan', and 'Extend &amp; do'. At the bottom right of the window is a button labeled 'End Program'.

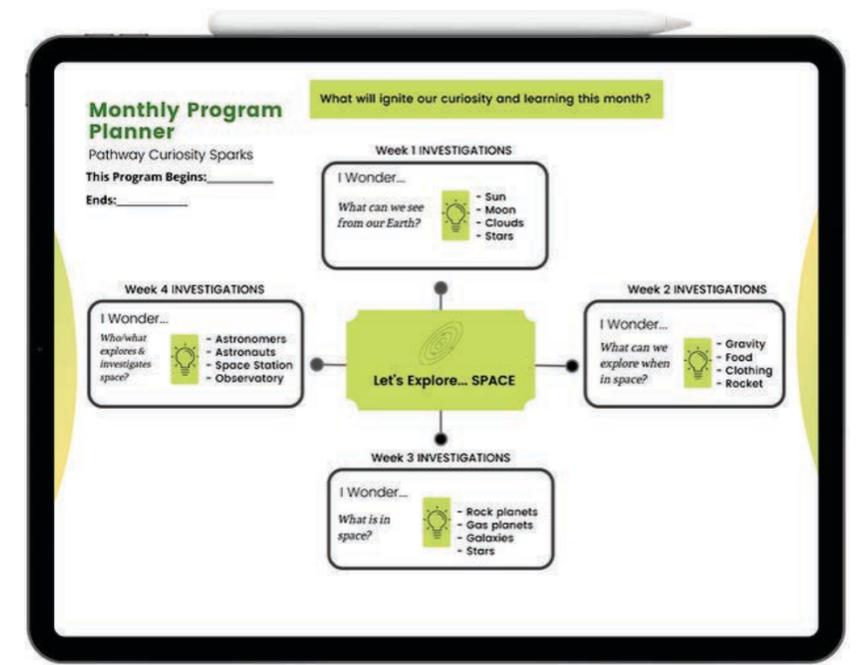
# MORE EXAMPLES





# VISUAL STRATEGIES FOR LEADERS

Demonstrate the steps and expectations for better learning outcomes - show completed examples or work through a template/observation/program together.



**Observation/Reflections**

**Analysis/Forward Planning**

**Program Plan**

**Organise**

Individual Learning - Analysis and Forward Planning Record

Our Current Program of Play and Learning

Individual Learning - Analysis and Forward Planning Record

Monthly Program A

My Weekly Organisation Planner (Multi-Age Group)

Red arrows indicate a flow from Observation/Reflections to Analysis/Forward Planning, then to Program Plan, and finally to Organise. A purple arrow labeled 'Come back & Evaluate' points from the Program Plan back to Analysis/Forward Planning.

**INDIVIDUAL LEARNING - ANALYSIS AND FORWARD PLANNING RECORD**

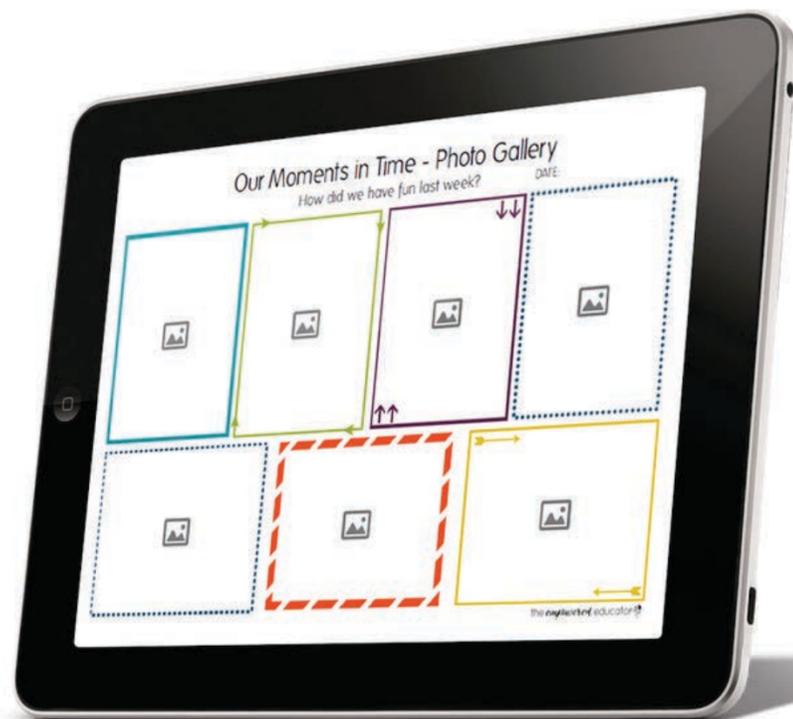
Date: 20/10/14 Name: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Format & Date	2. Analysis of Learning	3. Future Planning	4. Program/Plan Date	5. Planned Activity Evaluation
<b>Daily Reflection "Our Day"</b>	From this observation I note the following: Tara is showing a real interest in problem solving and wanting to find out how things work for herself. She showed a willingness and concentration to stick with a task until completion.	<b>Possible Extension Activities:</b> Tray of magnetic and non-magnetic items - investigate & discuss Use internet videos to explore use of magnets and magnetic fields.	24.9.14 2.10.14	11.10.14 Tara spent quite a lot of time working out which objects on the tray were able to be picked up by the magnet and asked many questions about why some objects didn't 'stick' to the magnet.
<b>Formal Obs Or Learning Story</b>	She was able to use descriptive language to convey her thoughts. She used reflective thinking to consider why things might happen a number of times.	<b>Intentional Teaching - using Scales and teddy bear counters to explore balance and weight- problem solving skills</b>		She didn't show a great deal of interest in the internet videos. Need to find simpler videos relevant her age.
<b>Photo Collage Obs 18/5/14</b>	She was able to coordinate both hands to Problem solve, sort and sequence. She thought about a way to extend the activity and challenge her thinking.			She absolutely loved the scale activity and spent time looking for other objects around the house to use in the scales. Used language to express her thoughts and work through problem solving processes.



# VISUAL STRATEGIES FOR LEADERS

Use photos of different resources and documentation options for individual steps of the cycle to show the possibilities of what they could use.



# MORE EXAMPLES

My Day Today  Date

My Day in photos

How was my day today?

Today I was....

Happy

Busy

Tired

A little sad

Today I ate....

Well

Just picked

Loved eating

Today I drank  bottles.

Today I slept from  to

Today I rested from  to

Today I used the toilet ....

By myself

With help

With a few accidents

Educator Notes

Next time I come to play please send more....

---

My favourite activity today was....

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My Monthly Focus

Planning Ahead think about your month ahead, what you want to achieve, what last month's reflections told you & how you will move forward & continue to grow & learn.

My 3 big goals for the month ahead are:

☺

☺

☺

The 3 actions I commit to taking to achieve my goals are:

What do I need to review & plan for based on my last monthly rewind?

OUR CURRENT PROGRAM OF PLAY AND LEARNING THIS WEEK

6 - 12 Years Planner Week Beginning :

EXPLORING OUR WORLD	INVITING THE IMAGINATION IN	LET'S GET MOVING	CREATIVE & SENSORY PLAY
FINE MOTOR/ MANIPULATIVE PLAY	CONNECTING THROUGH COMMUNICATION	ENCOURAGING IDENTITY & INDEPENDENCE	EVERY DAY ESSENTIALS
INTENTIONAL TEACHING FOCUS SUGGESTIONS	SPONTANEOUS MOMENTS & LEARNING	FEEDBACK / VOICES	

MY DAY - HOW DID I PLAY & LEARN?

CHILD NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

TODAY I WAS \_\_\_\_\_

HAPPY

BUSY

TIRED

A LITTLE SAD

TODAY I ATE \_\_\_\_\_

WELL

JUST PICKED

LOVED EATING

TODAY I DRANK  BOTTLES.

TODAY I SLEPT FROM  TO

TODAY I RESTED FROM  TO

TODAY I USED THE TOILET \_\_\_\_\_

BY MYSELF

WITH HELP

WITH A FEW ACCIDENTS

TODAY MY NAPPY WAS CHANGED \_\_\_\_\_ TIMES.

MY MEMORABLE MOMENT WAS: \_\_\_\_\_

LOOKING BACK & CLOSING THE LOOP

CHILD'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

E.S.A. \_\_\_\_\_ EDUCATOR: \_\_\_\_\_

HOW DID THE PLANNED EXPERIENCE GO?

☺

☺

IS THERE ANY FURTHER ACTION TO TAKE ON THIS?

WHAT DO I FEEL IS IMPORTANT TO SHARE WITH THE FAMILY?

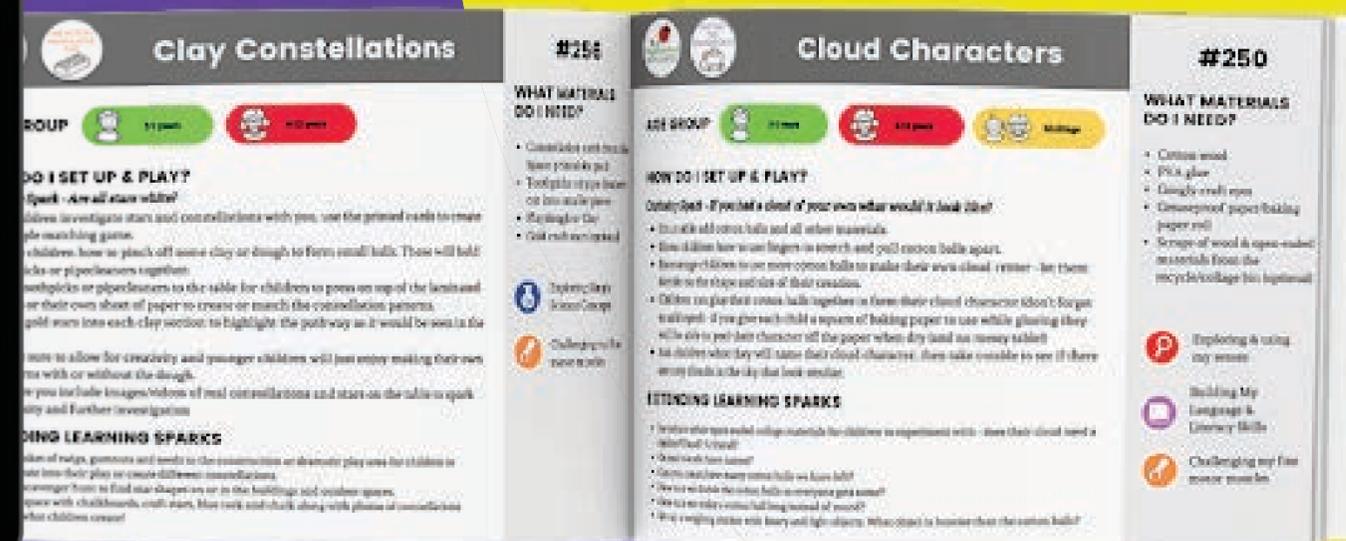
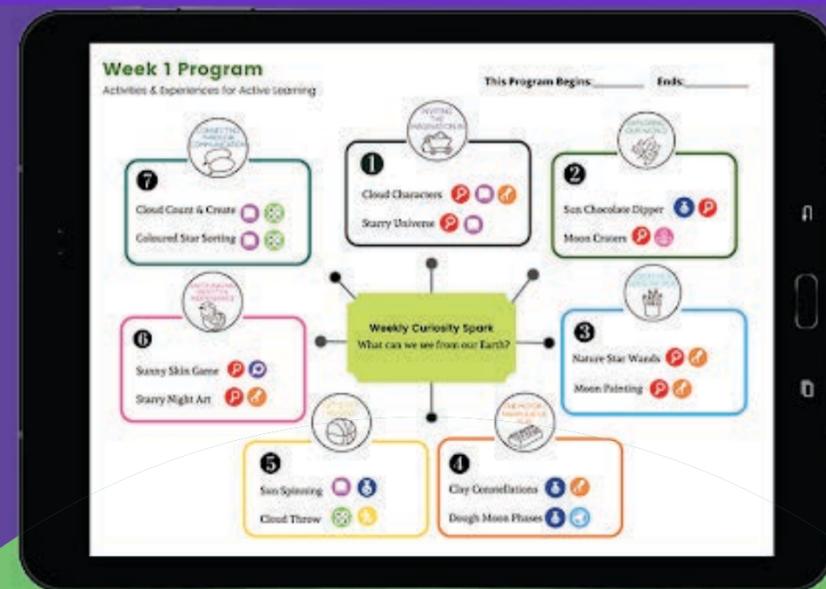
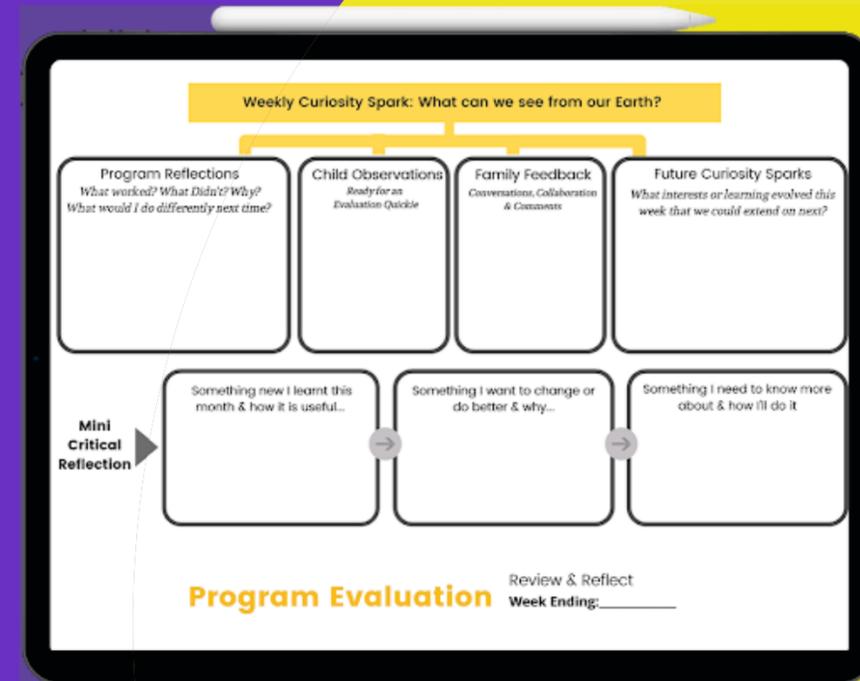
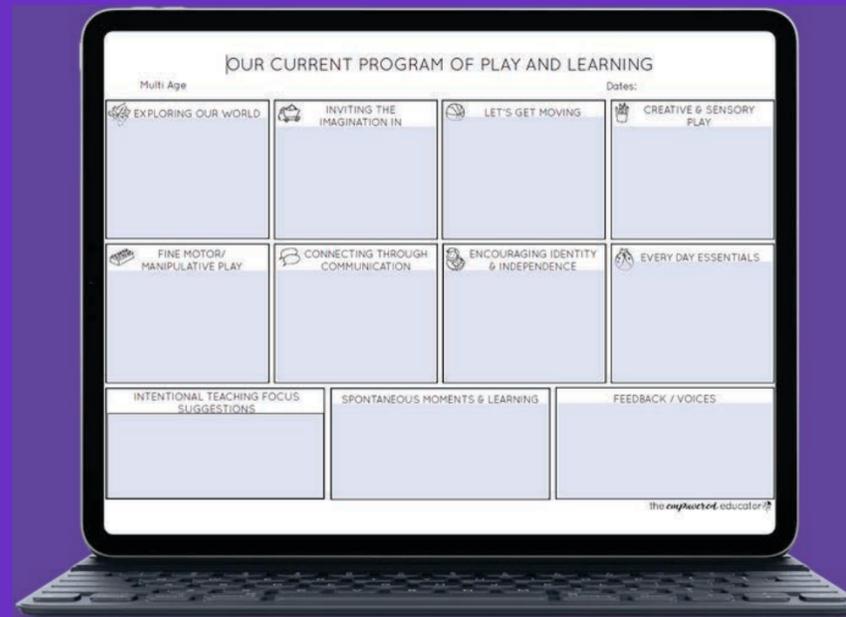
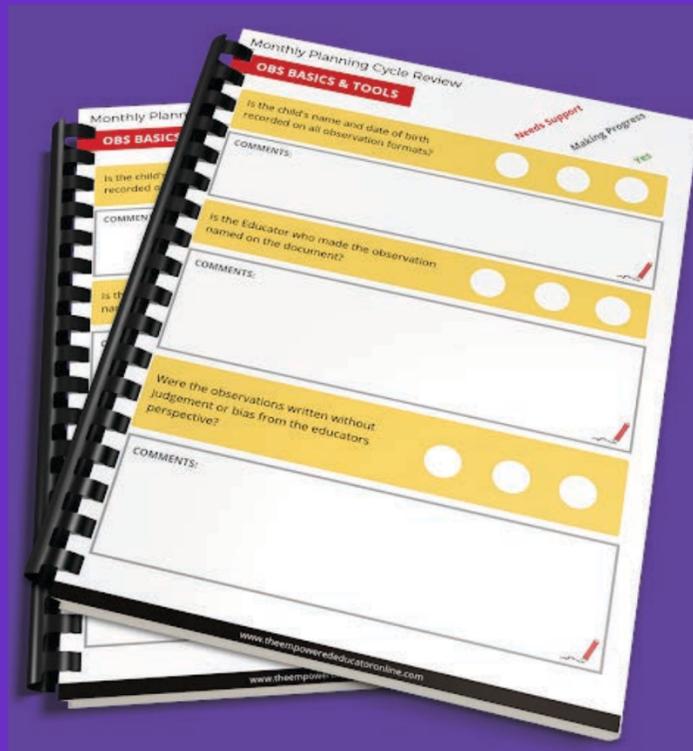
Format & Date	Analysis of Learning
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Formal Obs Or Learning Story	<p>She was able to use descriptive language To convey her thoughts</p> <p>She used reflective thinking to consider why things might happen a number of times</p>
Photo Collage Obs 18/9/14	<p>She was able to coordinate both hands to Problem solve, sort and sequence.</p> <p>She thought about a way to extend the activity and challenge her thinking.</p>



## **Visual Strategies for Leaders**

**Make planning reviews and programs more visual/interactive, colour code learning or focus areas if needed with stickers or pens.**

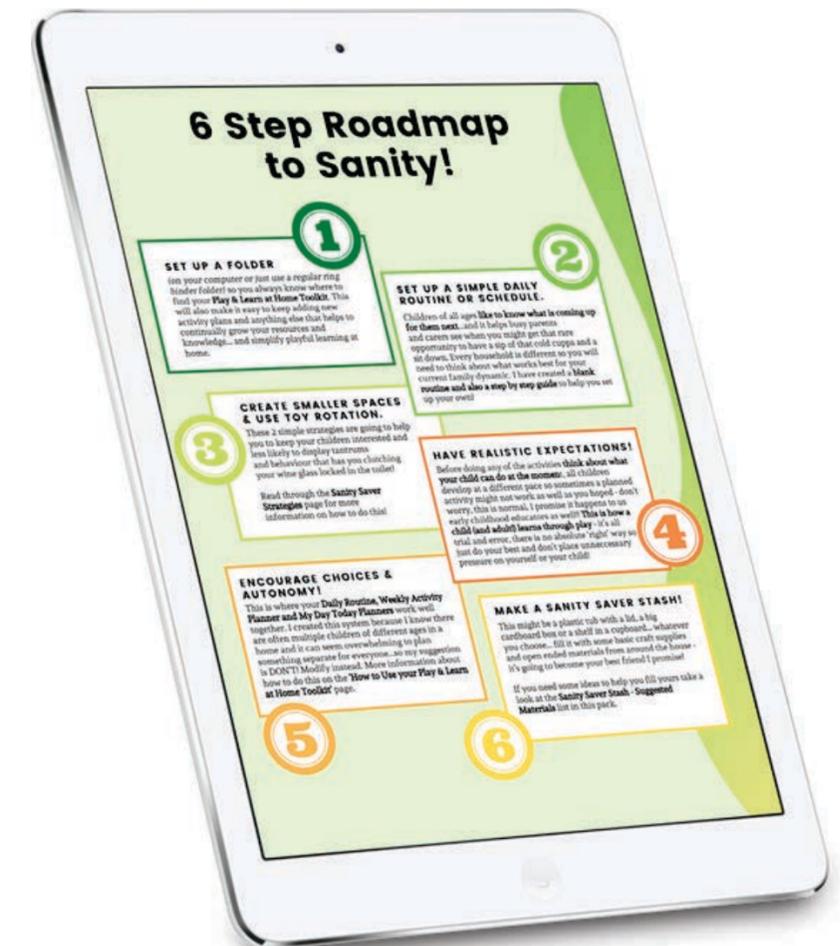
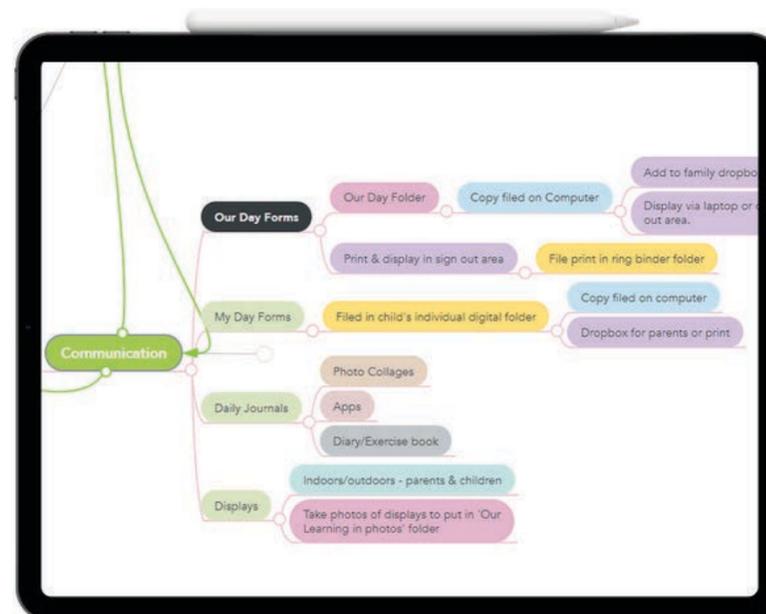
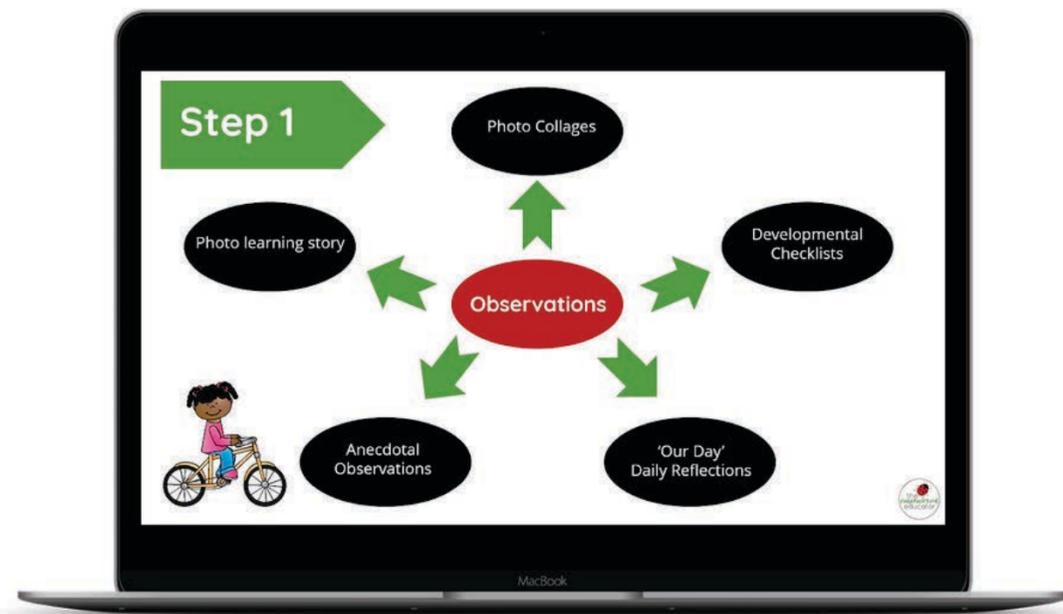
**Assign a colour to each step of the planning cycle then create matching coloured folders or add the same colour to the specific documentation tools that must be used (sticky dots or labels work well).**





# VISUAL STRATEGIES FOR LEADERS

Draw a mindmap together so you can help educators to visualise and therefore clarify what is expected for each step



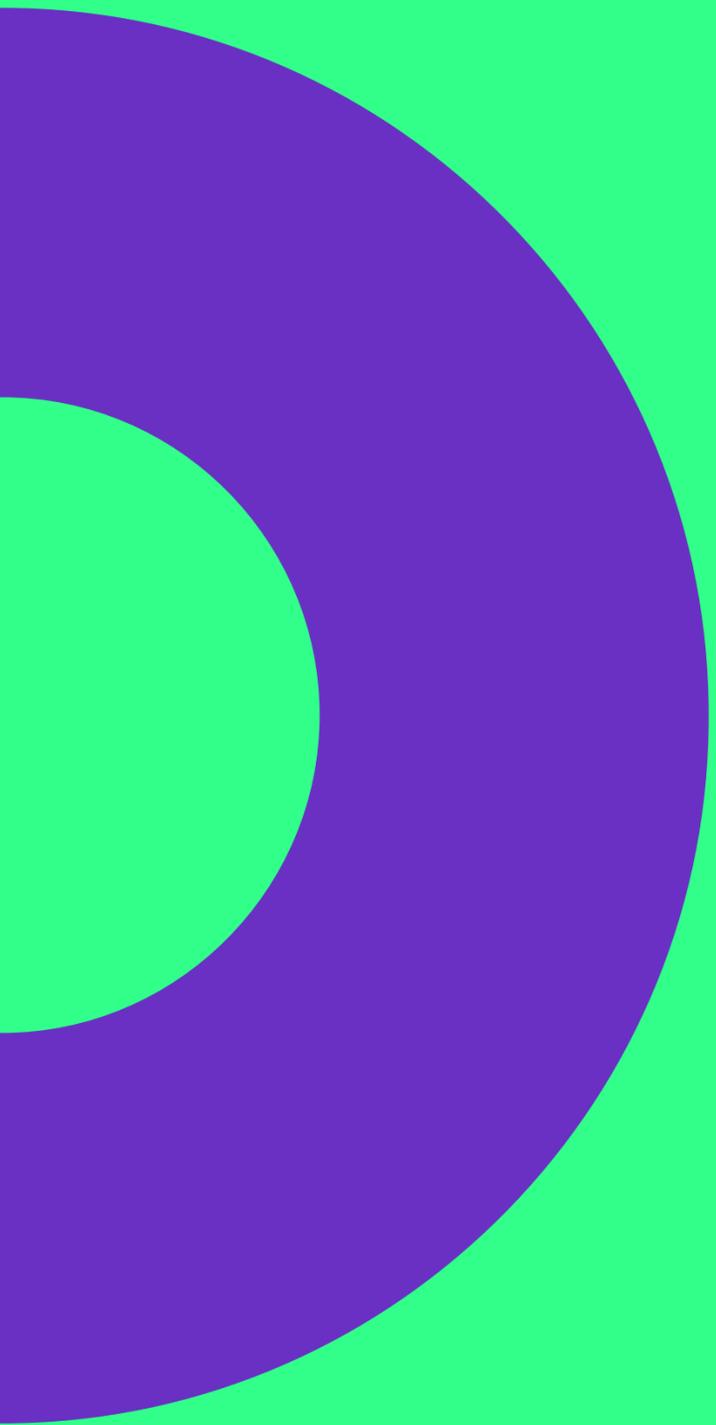


# VISUAL STRATEGIES FOR LEADERS

Use visual aids like whiteboards, smartboards, powerpoint presentations, photo cards, coloured sticky dots/labels, coloured baskets, posters, icons, butcher's paper, visual checklists and charts. -



MONTH	FOCUS AREA	PROJECT/TASK DETAILS	ACTION TO TAKE
JANUARY	Planning & Communication	Family Orientation Sessions Set Collaborative Goals	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Print &amp; compile orientation kits</li> <li>2. Set session times with parents</li> <li>3. Use orientation templates &amp; set goals for the term.</li> </ol>
	Environment	Add gravel patch & mud kitchen	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Order gravel to be delivered</li> <li>2. Working bee to spread gravel</li> <li>3. Old sink for mud kitchen</li> </ol>
FEBRUARY	Professional Development	Learn how to use the new parent communication app.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Attend session with Ed Leader</li> <li>2. Attend training webinar</li> <li>3. Trial use with parents in room</li> </ol>
	Planning & Communication	Set up Portfolios for year	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Print portfolio pages in member hub</li> <li>2. Add to folders</li> <li>3. Enter 'about me' &amp; 'first day' info</li> </ol>
MARCH	Assessment	Update Summative Assessments	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Collect fabulous folders needed</li> <li>2. Collect relevant child folders</li> <li>3. Summative Assessment Template</li> </ol>



# Visual Strategies for Educators

Some ideas that may help you to learn visually - even if you are working independently.

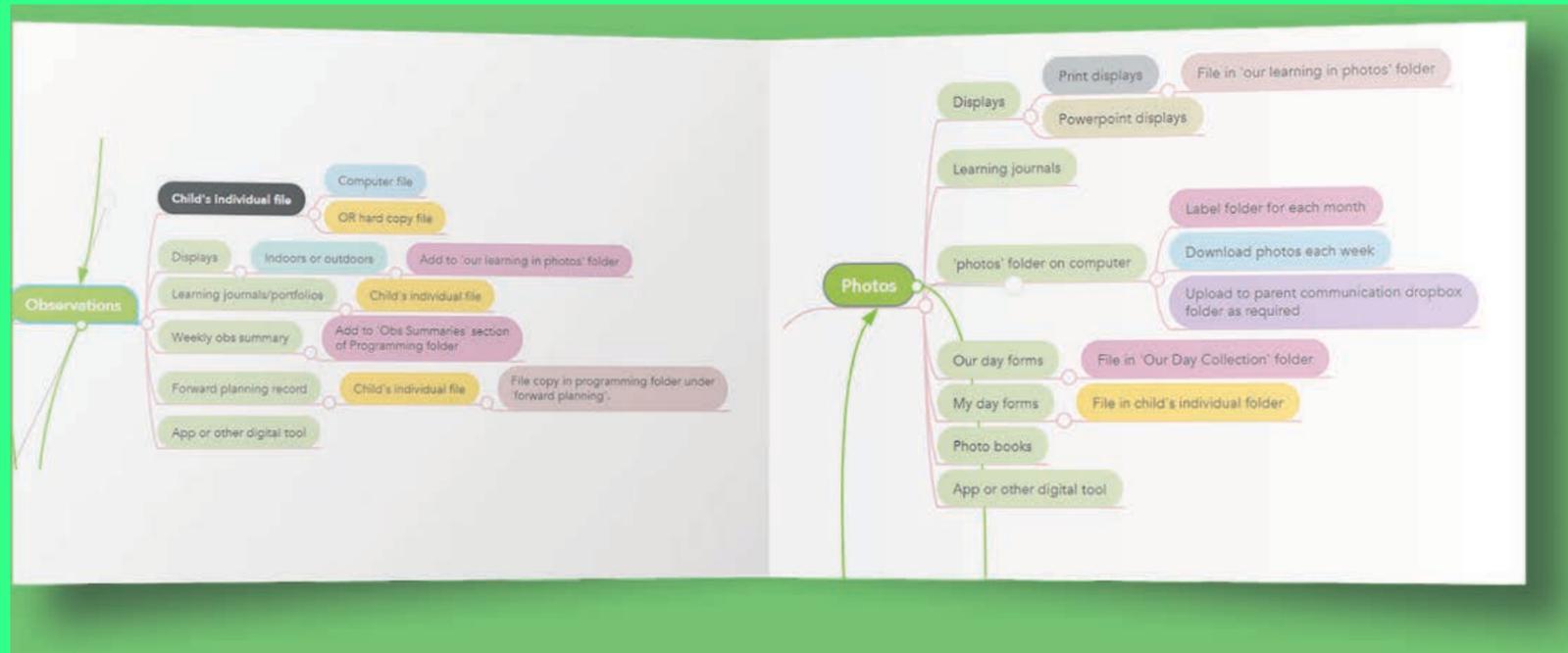


# VISUAL STRATEGIES FOR EDUCATORS



Take notes using different **colour** pens to highlight essential information. It helps you to identify & retain the information.

Organise the information that you want to learn into graphs, charts or tables like excel or google sheets instead of looking at a page of text to read through!



**MY EMPOWERED SIMPLE SCHEDULE - example**

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	
	TIME	TIME	TIME	TIME	TIME	
Check emails/bfast/exercise. TO DO LIST	6.30 - 60	Check emails/bfast/exercise. TO DO LIST	- 60	Check emails/bfast/exercise. TO DO LIST	- 60	Check emails/bfast/exercise. TO DO LIST
Prep craft & tables Safety Check	-30	Prep craft & tables Safety Check	7.30 -30	Prep craft & tables Safety Check	7.30 -30	Toy Rotation & organisation
Start FDC Day/Shift	8.00	Start FDC Day/Shift	8.00	Start FDC Day/Shift	8.00	Start FDC Day/Shift
Mentor Session	-45	Quickie Obs	-30	Quickie Reflection	-15	Update fabulous Folders
Break/Lunch Our Day Form/App	1.00 -60	Break/Lunch Our Day Form/APP	1.00 -60	Break/Lunch Our Day Form/App	1.00 -60	Break/Lunch Our Day Form/App
Quickie Obs	-15	Set up weekly learning display	-30	Quickie Obs	-15	Upload Photos
Clear Desk				Wash Toys with Children	-60	
Write Program	-45	Learning/Member Hub	-30	Action Plan Project	-60	Forward Planning
					-30	Reflection Folder

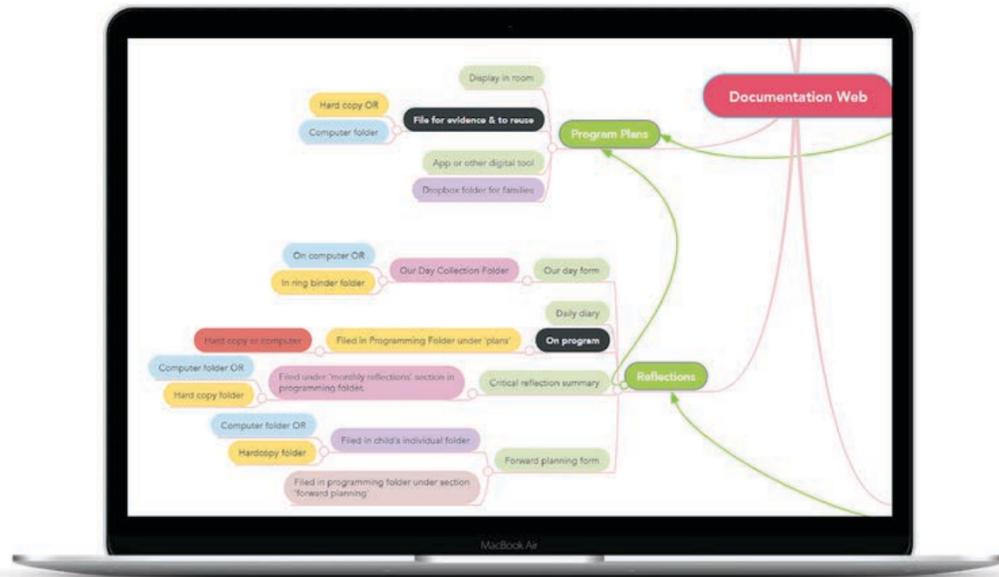




# VISUAL STRATEGIES FOR EDUCATORS

Draw mind maps or pathways for the topics you want to remember or build on.

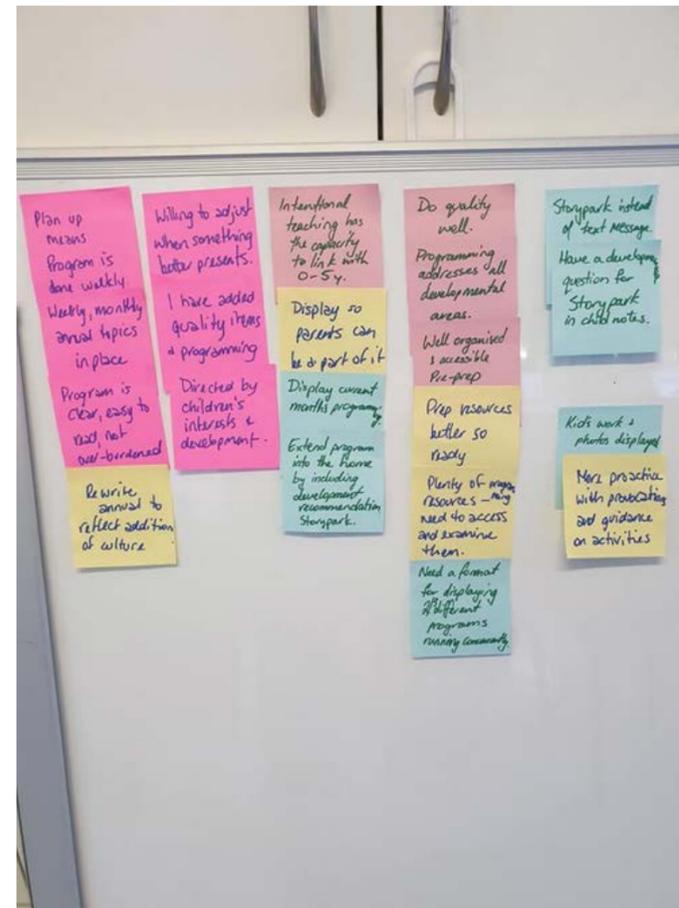
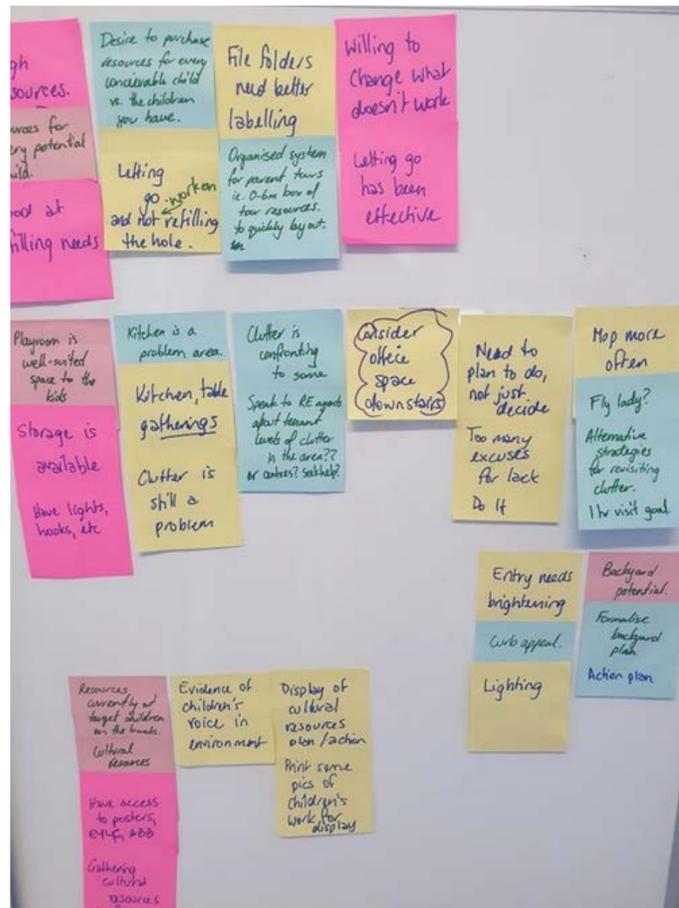
This helps you to visualise how each action leads to another.





# VISUAL STRATEGIES FOR EDUCATORS

Set up a post it party and take photos of your finished wall.





# VISUAL STRATEGIES FOR EDUCATORS

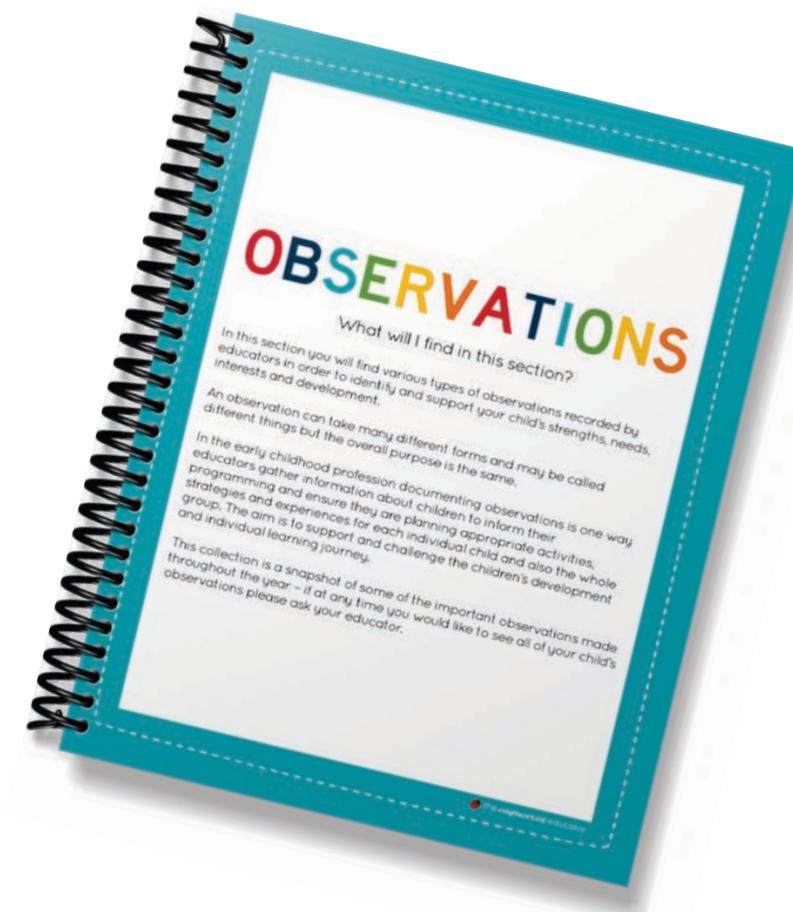
Show parents your planning steps and program activities visually through displays, environments, parent communication tools.





# VISUAL STRATEGIES FOR EDUCATORS

Use coloured sticky notes, cover pages or labels for each planning folder (observations/program etc) that correspond to colours you allocate to each step.





## VISUAL STRATEGIES FOR EDUCATORS

Cut out 5 coloured circles and assign them to steps of the planning cycle.

Write down the templates, tools or documentation you use now to help you complete those steps. *A little like the post it party but ongoing.*



# CYCLE CONFIDENCE BOOSTER

## SECRET #2 - CLARIFY **THE WHY**

**What is the purpose of each step in the planning cycle?  
Why do we do these steps?**



When we see the importance in smaller everyday actions, parent communication and everyday routines, observations help us to **compare what we are seeing now** to the knowledge we already have of the child.

**WHY DO WE  
OBSERVE  
CHILDREN?**



# \* A meaningful observation helps us as educators to...

- Understand the child and their needs with more clarity.
- Assess their current and ongoing development.
- Identify their interests, needs and what they are learning through everyday play.



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## A meaningful observation helps us as educators to...

- Keep families in the loop about what their child is doing when away from their care - the special moments, developmental milestones and goals you can work on together as a collaborative partnership. This information can also help educators to support parents to continue the learning in their home environment as well.
- Make decisions about how to plan future activities, environments, challenges and whether what you are providing currently is effective.



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# WHEN SHOULD WE DOCUMENT AN OBSERVATION?

Educators don't always have to be on high alert watching for an obvious big new skill or interest for it to be important and worth further reflection.

The moment just needs to be significant in the day to day journey of the child and stand out to you as important to record because of the knowledge you already have of this child.



# \* A meaningful observation helps us as educators to...

- Understand the child and their needs with more clarity.
- Assess their current and ongoing development.
- Identify their interests, needs and what they are learning through everyday play.



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## OTHER INDICATORS...

- When you note an obvious new interest, developmental skill, preference or action.
- When you recognise progress against a specific EYLF learning outcome or developmental area.
- When you have concerns about a child's social/emotional wellbeing or development.

The image shows a tablet displaying a 'Child Developmental Milestones Record' form for 3-5 years. The form includes fields for Child's Name, D.O.B., Educator observing, Age, and LinkingForward Planning reference date. It features a navigation bar with tabs for Physical, Social, Emotional, Cognitive, and Language Development. The 'Physical Development' section is highlighted, showing 'Connecting to the EYLF' with EYLF Outcome 3 and NQS Areas 1, 2, 3, 5, 6. A table below tracks evidence of development with 'Yes' and 'No' columns and a 'Did you note something of significance?' column.

Can you see evidence of the following development or skill?	Yes	No	Did you note something of significance?
Hops, jumps and runs with ease			
Climbs steps with alternating feet			
Gallops and skips by leading with one foot			
Transfers weight forward to throw ball			
Attempts to catch ball with hands			
Climbs playground equipment with increasing agility			
Holds crayon/pencil etc. between thumb and first two fingers			
Exhibits hand preference			
Imitates variety of shapes in drawing, e.g. circles			
Independently cuts paper with scissors			



# OTHER INDICATORS...

- When you notice changes in behaviour that might be different to the usual.
- You notice subtle dietary changes, food refusal or oral aversion issues.
- You want to record first sounds, words and interesting conversations.

My Day Today \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

My Day in photos



How was my day today?

Today I was ...

Happy

Busy

Tired

A little sad

Today I ate ...

Well

Just picked

Loved eating \_\_\_\_\_

Today I drank \_\_\_\_\_ bottles.

Today I slept from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

Today I rested from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

Today I used the toilet ...

By myself

With help

With a few accidents

Educator Notes

Next time I come to play please send more...

My favourite activity today was...

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*The frequency of your observations will depend upon the number of children in your care, the environment you work in and your centre or scheme expectations – there is no set magical number for compliance.*



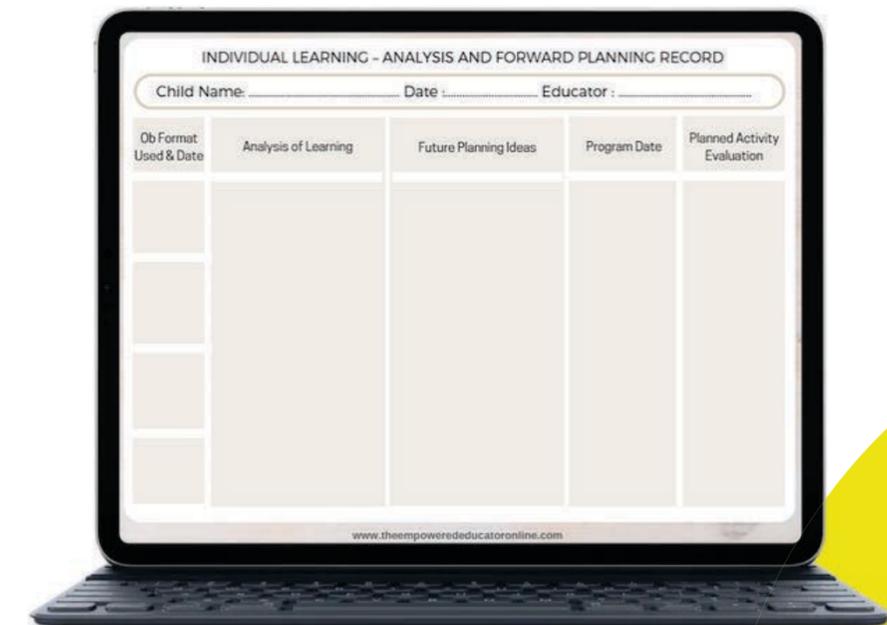
## OTHER INDICATORS...

- Exaggerated reactions when there are changes to transitions and routines.
- When you want to record meaningful social interactions with other educators, children and adults.

***An observation because you 'have to meet your weekly obs quota' is a waste of your time and does nothing to support the child on their learning journey.***

# WHY DO WE ANALYSE INFORMATION FROM THOSE OBSERVATIONS?

Interpreting, analysing and reflecting upon a child's observation is an important step and must serve a purpose other than just identifying what you saw or to fill in a step. This process will **HELP** you to save planning time if done correctly.





**It is not just about writing a summary of the child's development – we consider the following information so that we can then move onto planning future appropriate extension activities, experiences & environments.**

**This step helps us to interpret and understand children's current strengths, interests, developmental stage and highlight opportunities for further development.**



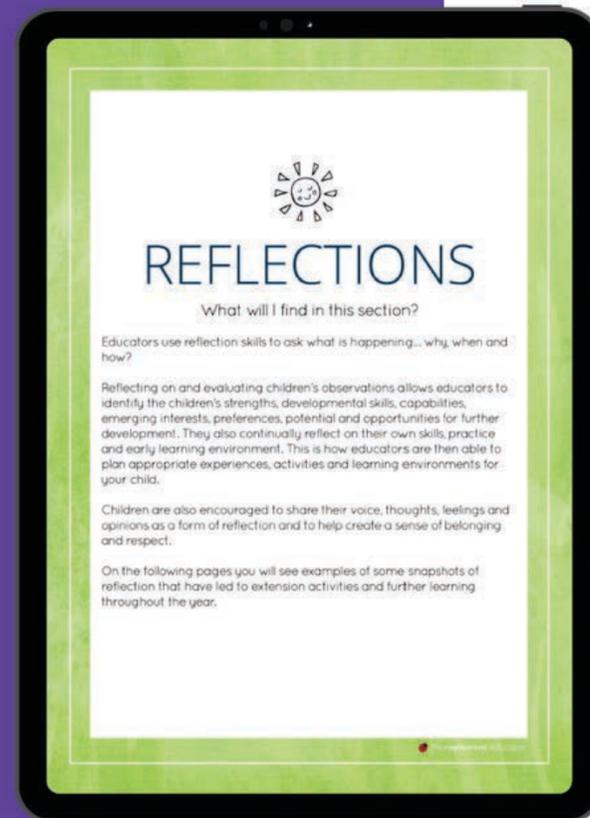
# ANALYSING OBSERVATIONS HELPS EDUCATORS TO...

- Clarify the learning that took place and if you might want to further support and extend on this.
- Draw on our knowledge of child development, different theories and perspectives along with core values and goals within the philosophy we follow.
- Identify developmental, social or emotional concerns.

**Week 1 - Completed Child Observations - Evaluation Quickies**  
For Week Ending: \_\_\_\_\_

<p>CHILD NAME: _____ DATE: _____</p> <p>What learning took place?</p> <p>What strengths, interests or concerns can I identify?</p> <p>Can I plan future experiences from this knowledge?</p> <p>How could I further support &amp; extend this child's learning?</p>	<p>CHILD NAME: _____ DATE: _____</p> <p>What learning took place?</p> <p>What strengths, interests or concerns can I identify?</p> <p>Can I plan future experiences from this knowledge?</p> <p>How could I further support &amp; extend this child's learning?</p>
---	---

# WHY DO WE REFLECT AND SET GOALS?



**Reflective practice means regularly asking questions of yourself and your actions to better understand why things happened in a certain way and how you might then use that information to inform your future actions, planning and practice as a whole.**

When we reflect on our programming, planning and documentation and meeting the requirements of the planning cycle we are talking about **reflection and analysis in regard to developing and extending a child's individual learning journey.**

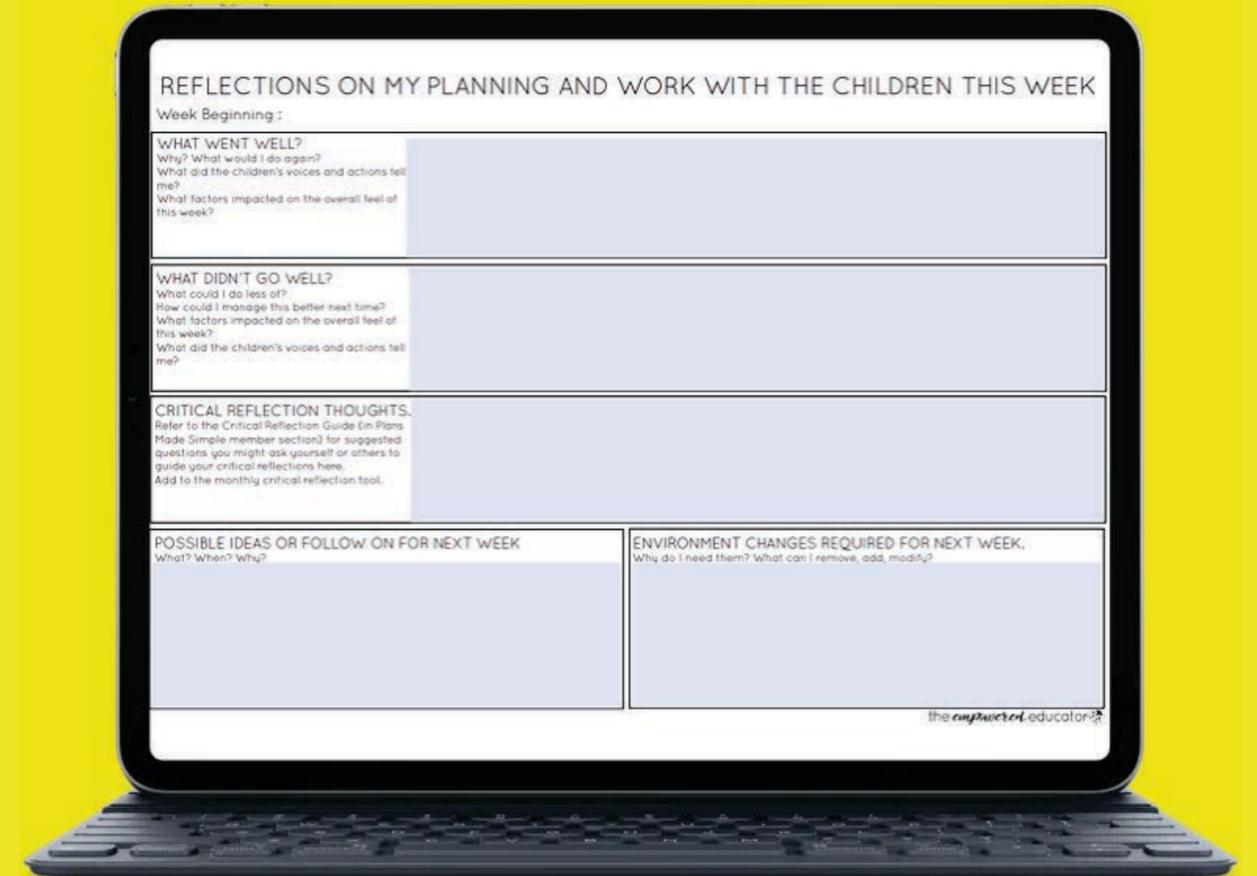
We need to set goals based on this information to ensure the observations, extensions and forward planning we do to support a child are above all meaningful.

It can and should challenge you and perhaps help you to initiate changes to your current practice and planning cycle framework if required – change the things that aren't working and further extend upon the things that are.



# Our reflection process should inform good quality practice across many steps of our realistic planning cycle including...

- Reflection and analysis of the individual or group observations you have taken.
- Reflections upon a planned individual or group extension activity.
- Reflections upon your completed daily/weekly/fortnightly/monthly program.



REFLECTIONS ON MY PLANNING AND WORK WITH THE CHILDREN THIS WEEK

Week Beginning :

**WHAT WENT WELL?**  
Why? What would I do again?  
What did the children's voices and actions tell me?  
What factors impacted on the overall feel of this week?

**WHAT DIDN'T GO WELL?**  
What could I do less of?  
How could I manage this better next time?  
What factors impacted on the overall feel of this week?  
What did the children's voices and actions tell me?

**CRITICAL REFLECTION THOUGHTS.**  
Refer to the Critical Reflection Guide (in Plans Made Simple member section) for suggested questions you might ask yourself or others to guide your critical reflections here.  
Add to the monthly critical reflection tool.

**POSSIBLE IDEAS OR FOLLOW ON FOR NEXT WEEK**  
What? When? Why?

**ENVIRONMENT CHANGES REQUIRED FOR NEXT WEEK.**  
Why do I need them? What can I remove, add, modify?

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## **WE DO WANT TO CONSIDER...**

- **If it would be beneficial to the child to find a way to further extend their learning or interest in this area... what is the goal?**
- **What specific activities you could plan that might fit into the next program for not just the individual child but also the group?**
- **If you will need to plan for an intentional teaching experience or just provide the environment and resources required?**



# WE DO WANT TO CONSIDER...

- What your core aim is by providing these extension activities? (*You might like to reflect on the learning outcomes and area here*)
- When you could realistically put this particular extension into the program?
- If this extension is a short term or long term goal?

GOALS FOR [redacted]  
LEAD EDUCATOR SUMMARY

WHAT DO I NEED AS AN INDIVIDUAL IN THE NEXT 3 MONTHS?  
[redacted]

HOW WILL YOU SUPPORT MY FAMILY & CULTURE?  
[redacted]

HOW WILL YOU COMMUNICATE REGULARLY WITH MY FAMILY?  
[redacted]

6.

# WHY DO WE NEED TO REVIEW AND EVALUATE AFTER THE EXTENSION ACTIVITY?

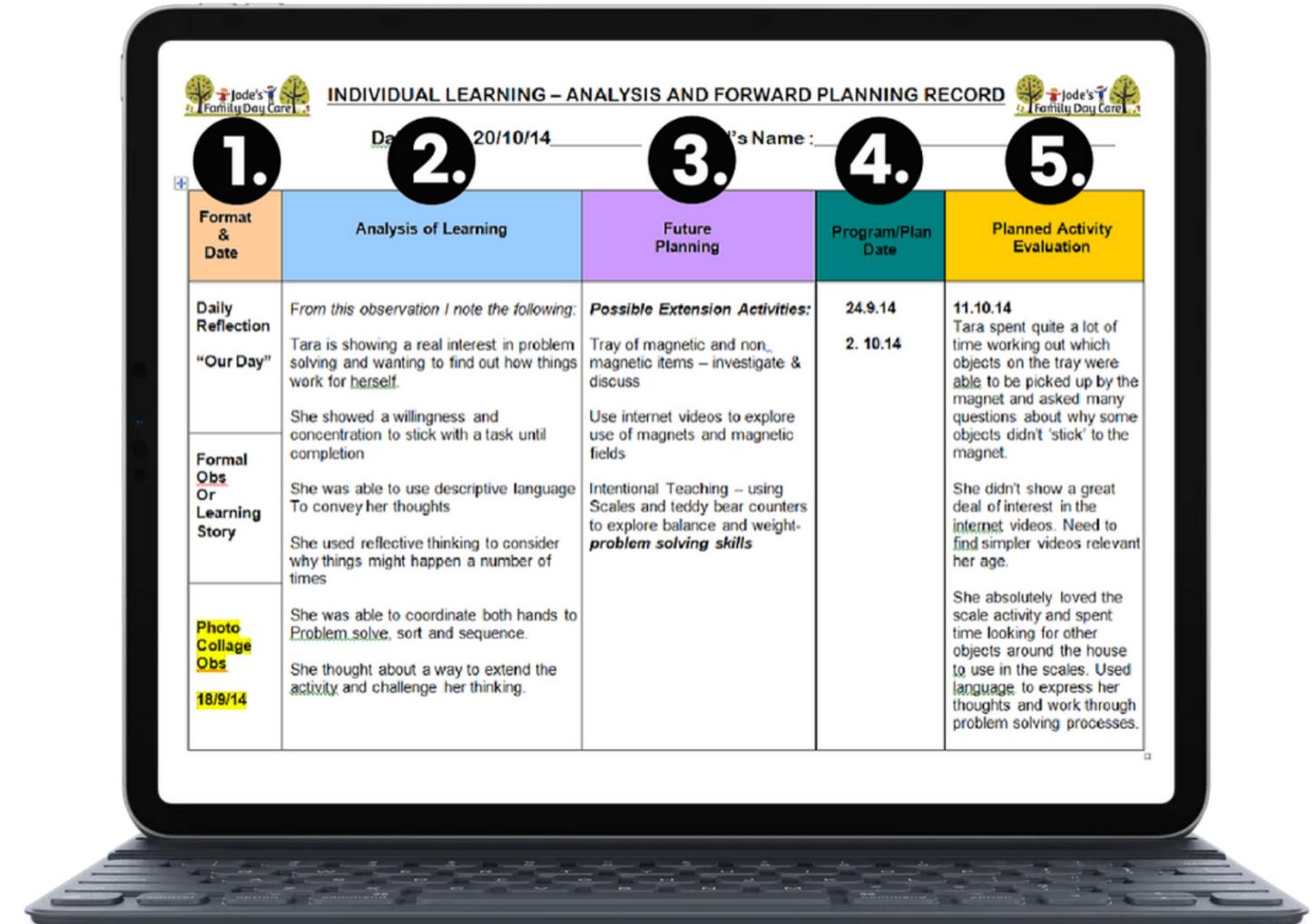
We want to reflect on the activity and the child's engagement with it so that we can easily collect any relevant additional information (*and not waste all of the work on the other steps!*)

Program/Plan Date	Planned Activity Evaluation
24.9.14	11.10.14
2. 10.14	<p>Tara spent quite a lot of time working out which objects on the tray were able to be picked up by the magnet and asked many questions about why some objects didn't 'stick' to the magnet.</p> <p>She didn't show a great deal of interest in the internet videos. Need to find simpler videos relevant her age.</p> <p>She absolutely loved the scale activity and spent time looking for other objects around the house to use in the scales. Used language to express her thoughts and work through problem solving processes.</p>

- **We need to know if there was a progression of the learning  
- was my goal for this child reached? How do I know this?**
- **We want to identify whether any other significant learning opportunities arose.**
- **We might have noticed a focus on another outcome or principle that's important to explore further in future planning.**

Evaluating how a planned extension activity went is an important step in closing the planning cycle loop and bringing all of the information together.

When we try to skip or rush through some of those steps it makes getting all the way around without feeling overwhelmed more difficult.



The image shows a laptop screen displaying a document titled "INDIVIDUAL LEARNING – ANALYSIS AND FORWARD PLANNING RECORD". The document is a table with five columns, numbered 1 to 5, representing different stages of the learning process. The columns are: 1. Format & Date, 2. Analysis of Learning, 3. Future Planning, 4. Program/Plan Date, and 5. Planned Activity Evaluation. The table contains detailed notes for a student named Tara, including observations, reflections, and planned activities. The document is dated 20/10/14.

1. Format & Date	2. Analysis of Learning	3. Future Planning	4. Program/Plan Date	5. Planned Activity Evaluation
Daily Reflection "Our Day"	<i>From this observation I note the following:</i> Tara is showing a real interest in problem solving and wanting to find out how things work for herself. She showed a willingness and concentration to stick with a task until completion	<b>Possible Extension Activities:</b> Tray of magnetic and non-magnetic items – investigate & discuss Use internet videos to explore use of magnets and magnetic fields	24.9.14 2. 10.14	11.10.14 Tara spent quite a lot of time working out which objects on the tray were able to be picked up by the magnet and asked many questions about why some objects didn't 'stick' to the magnet.
Formal Obs Or Learning Story	She was able to use descriptive language To convey her thoughts She used reflective thinking to consider why things might happen a number of times	Intentional Teaching – using Scales and teddy bear counters to explore balance and weight- <b>problem solving skills</b>		She didn't show a great deal of interest in the internet videos. Need to find simpler videos relevant her age.
Photo Collage Obs 18/9/14	She was able to coordinate both hands to Problem solve, sort and sequence. She thought about a way to extend the activity and challenge her thinking.			She absolutely loved the scale activity and spent time looking for other objects around the house to use in the scales. Used language to express her thoughts and work through problem solving processes.

# It's almost like a loop isn't it? Some may say a cycle!

Each step leads to the next and each step provides a lift up to the next step.



PRESENTED BY  
JODIE CLARKE



# \* When we don't understand the WHY behind each step we waste time trying to...

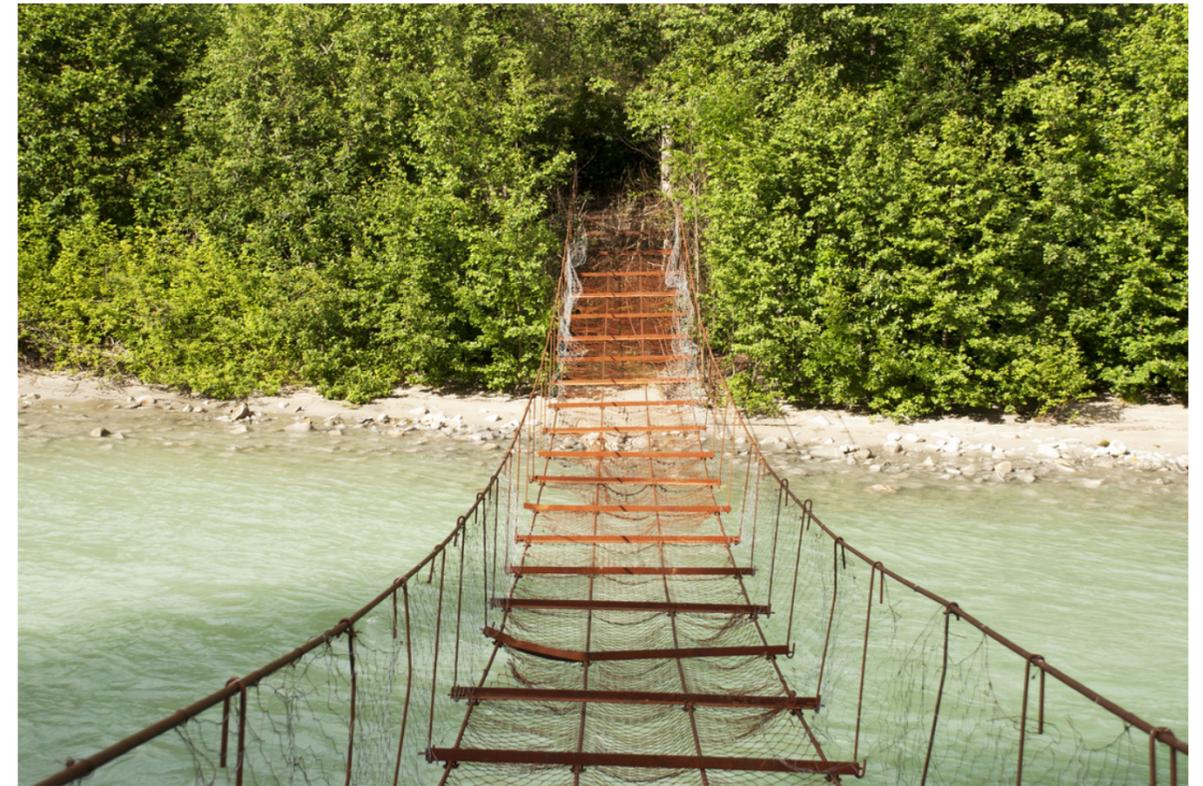
- Figure out what to write for the next step
- Form some sort of 'clear link' between all the writing
- Come up with ideas for our next program
- Get unstuck from the black hole of forward planning procrastination - how do I even extend on this observation?



It's ok to want to complete your planning cycle faster by skipping a few steps and... we are all human.

*But here's the catch...*

...if you continually find yourself wavering on a wobbly framework when you try to move to different steps of the planning process, you need to know that understanding WHY each step exists is only part of the solution.



**IT'S JUST AS IMPORTANT TO FIGURE OUT YOUR HOW.**

# CYCLE CONFIDENCE BOOSTER

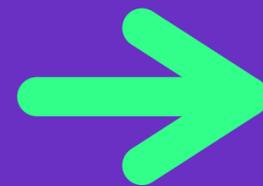
## SECRET #3 - DECIDE ON **YOUR HOW**

Determining **HOW** you will combine and make use of the different tools, resources and knowledge accessible to you are what will **ultimately ensure that linking each step of the cycle together** becomes an easier and less time-consuming task for you.



I want you to feel empowered as an educator so my goal for you is to first understand WHY you need something and then be very clear about HOW you will use it... when you have that information you can then find the set of documentation tools that work for YOU and ditch the time wasting and excessive writing.

In the next few slides I'm going to show you a few examples of resources, templates and strategies that I developed over the years from my own experiences in early childhood to specifically build up my own framework and help me make sense of the HOW, I have since modified and updated many of them to help our hub members reach this point too... without all the trial and error I went through!



**I KNOW IT CAN BE MORE HELPFUL TO SEE EXAMPLES RATHER THAN A LIST OF DOT POINTS SO AS I TALK I'LL SHARE IMAGES WITH YOU...**

**How will you choose to document your observations & analyse the learning that has taken place?**

What do I need to know or do to start this week feeling confident and organised?

Intentional Teaching & Focus Children

Environment Changes

Materials & Resources

Family Communication

Incursions or Excursions

Events & Celebrations

Activity Guide #

**Week 1 Program** Preparation & Planning  
Week Beginning: \_\_\_\_\_

MY WEEKLY ORGANISATION PLANNER (Multi-Age Group)

Week Beginning: \_\_\_\_\_

THIS WEEK'S EARLY LEARNING FOCUS OR THEME

THIS WEEK'S REFLECTIONS & OBSERVATIONS THAT MAY GUIDE PLANNING THIS WEEK.  
Is there something you need to try again, do differently, observe, extend upon or introduce?

SPECIAL INCURSIONS, EXCURSIONS OR COMMUNITY VISITS THIS WEEK

ACTIVITY GUIDES NEEDED FOR THIS PLAN  
Add numbers of the activity plans required for quick reference

INDOOR ENVIRONMENT SETUP  
What do I need to add, change, modify or remove this week?

OUTDOOR LEARNING ENVIRONMENT SETUP  
What do I need to add, change, modify or remove this week?

THIS WEEK'S SHOPPING LIST

CURRENT BUDGET: \_\_\_\_\_

the empowered educator

*My Weekly Self*

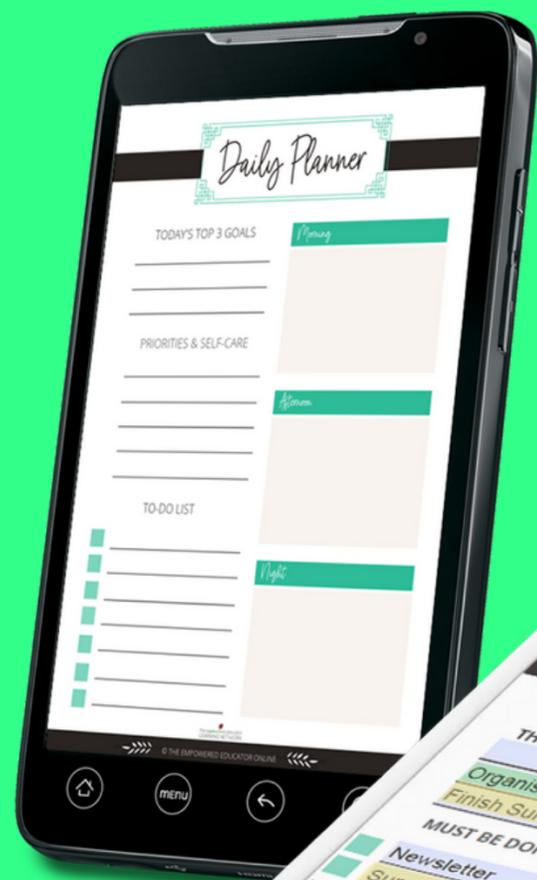
What does this week ahead look like for me? What do I want to get done? How am I going to make it happen?

Is there anything from last week to include in my forward planning?

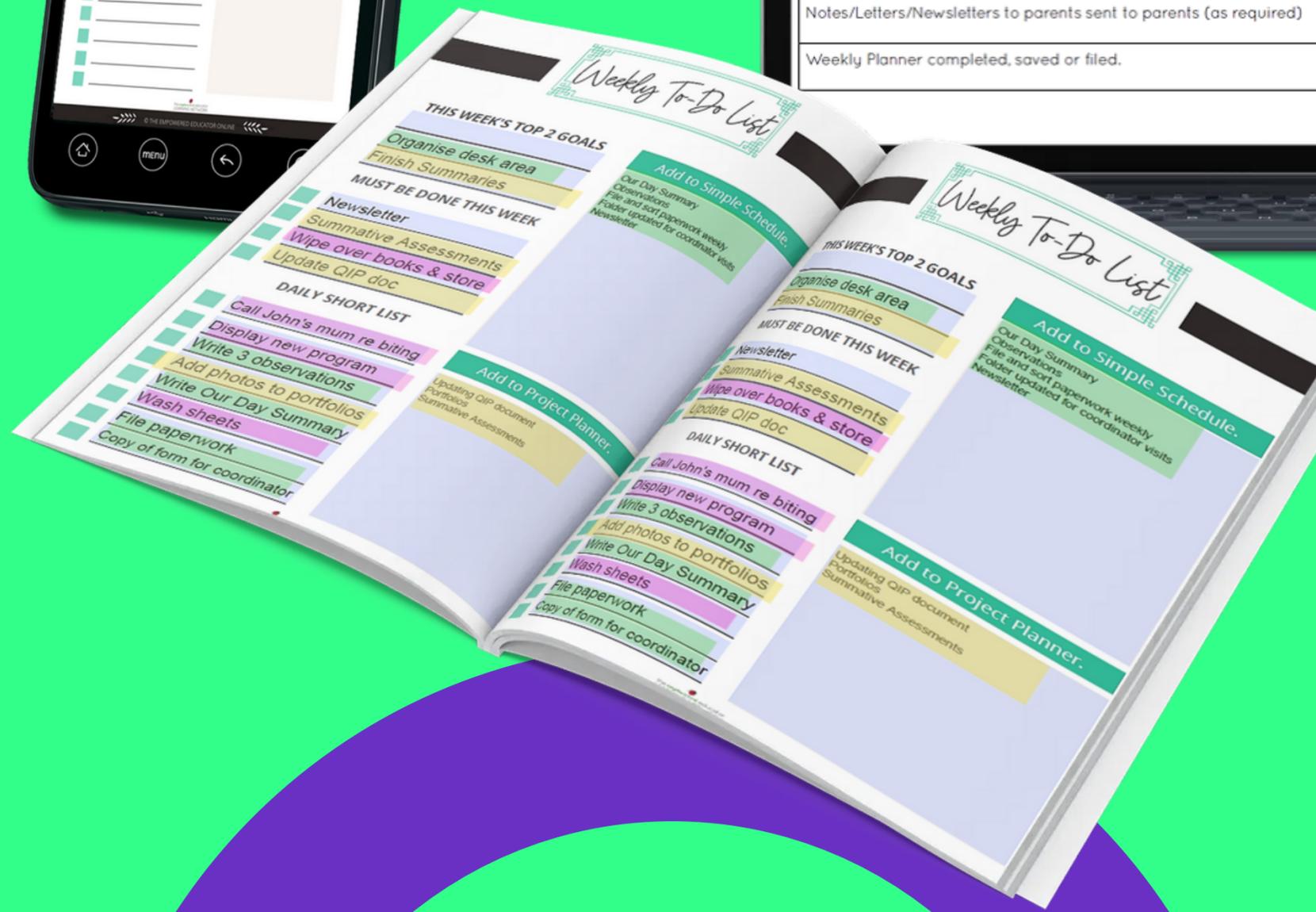
Are there any events, celebrations or community commitments?

How will I be connecting and engaging with families this week?

What learning areas and intentional teaching am I focusing on this week?



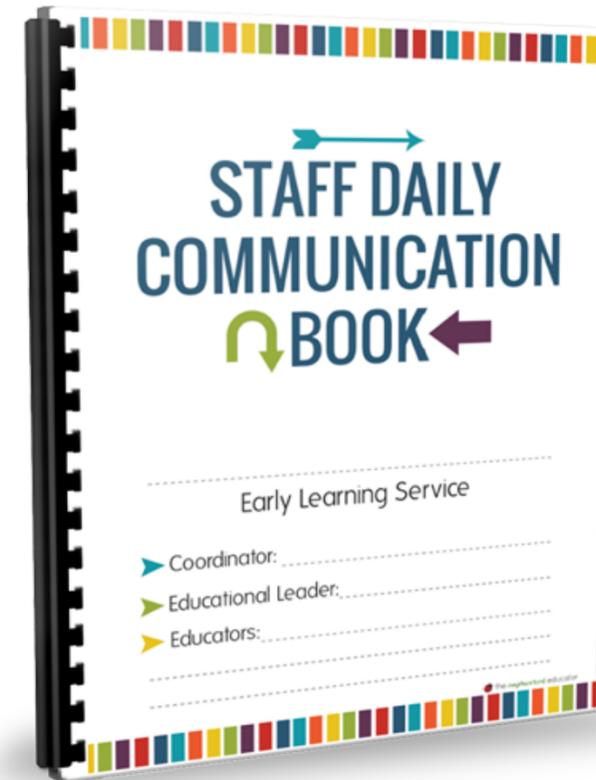
Number of Individual Child or group observations documented this week	
Analysis of Learning (of documented observations) completed.	
Forward Planning ideas/activities/suggestions recorded for next week's planning	
Brief weekly (or daily) reflections and critical reflection notes have been completed..	
Home Daycare/ Family Day care time-sheets/invoices/accounts/admin completed (if applicable)	
Early Learning centre/room/group (if applicable) administration paperwork completed and filed (as required weekly).	
Toy rotation organised for next week (if applicable)	
Environment changes required due to group dynamics, changes in d reflections and observations have been identified	
Notes/Letters/Newsletters to parents sent to parents (as required)	
Weekly Planner completed, saved or filed.	



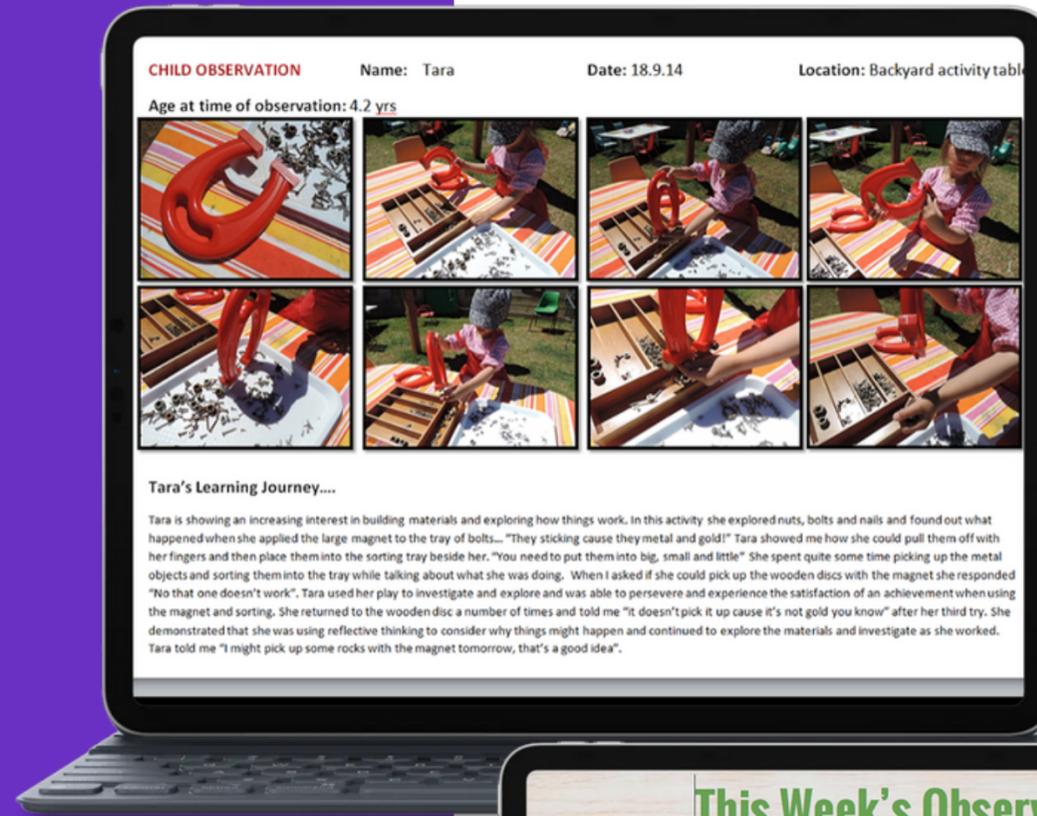
## Weekly Planning Checklist

1. Individual & Group observations formally recorded.
2. Analysis of learning identified & recorded from observations.
3. Possible forward planning noted for group & individuals.
4. **Brief reflection** on overall weekly program & practice noted.
5. Used forward planning notes & information from weekly reflection to help inform next week's program.
6. Program plan with activities, environment changes and opportunities for open ended play meeting learning outcomes recorded on preferred template or tool and displayed.
7. Materials/prep needed for next week identified, shopping list

**How will you communicate and collaborate regularly with parents and other educators and use this information throughout your cycle ?**







**How will you choose to document your observations & analyse the learning that has taken place?**

### Week 1 - Completed Child Observations - Evaluation Quickies

For Week Ending: \_\_\_\_\_

<p><b>CHILD NAME:</b> _____ <b>DATE:</b> _____</p> <p>What learning took place?</p> <p>What strengths, interests or concerns can I identify?</p> <p>Can I plan future experiences from this knowledge?</p> <p>How could I further support &amp; extend this child's learning?</p>	<p><b>CHILD NAME:</b> _____ <b>DATE:</b> _____</p> <p>What learning took place?</p> <p>What strengths, interests or concerns can I identify?</p> <p>Can I plan future experiences from this knowledge?</p> <p>How could I further support &amp; extend this child's learning?</p>
---	---

Format & Date	Analysis of Learning
<b>Daily Reflection</b> "Our Day"	<p>From this observation I note the following:</p> <p>Tara is showing a real interest in problem solving and wanting to find out how things work for herself.</p> <p>She showed a willingness and concentration to stick with a task until completion</p>
<b>Formal Obs Or Learning Story</b>	<p>She was able to use descriptive language To convey her thoughts</p> <p>She used reflective thinking to consider why things might happen a number of times</p>
<b>Photo Collage Obs</b> 18/9/14	<p>She was able to coordinate both hands to Problem solve, sort and sequence.</p> <p>She thought about a way to extend the activity and challenge her thinking.</p>

Child Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Observation Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Educator: \_\_\_\_\_

What did I observe?



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### Cognitive Development

Connecting to the EYLF  
EYLF Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators - Children express ideas and make meaning using a range of media.  
NQS: Areas 1, 5

Can you see evidence of the following development or skill?	Yes	No	Did you note something of significance?
Understands opposites (e.g. big/little) and positional words (middle, end)			
Uses objects and materials to build or construct things e.g. block tower, puzzle, clay, sand and water			
Builds tower eight to ten blocks			
Answers simple questions			
Counts five to ten things			
Has a longer attention span			
Talks to self during play - to help guide what he/she does			
Follows simple instructions			
Follows simple rules and enjoys helping			
May write some numbers and letters			
Engages in dramatic play, taking on pretend character roles			
Recalls events correctly			
Counts by rote, having memorised numbers			
Touches objects to count - starting to understand relationship between numbers and objects			
Can recount a recent story			
Copies letters and may write some unprinted			
Can match and name some colours			

## Observations & Analysis Tool

Use the questions below to help ensure your observations are useful & time efficient

Questions to consider...	Tick if applicable
Did you look for and record only moments that stood out to you for some reason? A moment that made you excited/concerned/surprised/confused?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did you listen and record the child's authentic voice and what you actually saw take place (not your own interpretation) while making notes?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did you use the format/template/style that suits the situation, the time you had to observe and also your particular skill and comfort level?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did you incorporate visual, digital or audio tools/apps to record moments quickly and save you time so you could continue to be in the moment?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did you ask yourself if you can plan future experiences after evaluating this observation?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did you ask yourself if there anything in this observation that concerns you from a developmental perspective?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did you identify a child's strengths and/or interests from each observation?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did you use your observations to consider how you could further support and extend the child's/groups' interest/strength/learning journey?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did you use the information above to forward plan onto your next program?	<input type="checkbox"/>

The Empowered Educator Online 12

Child Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Observation Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Educator: \_\_\_\_\_

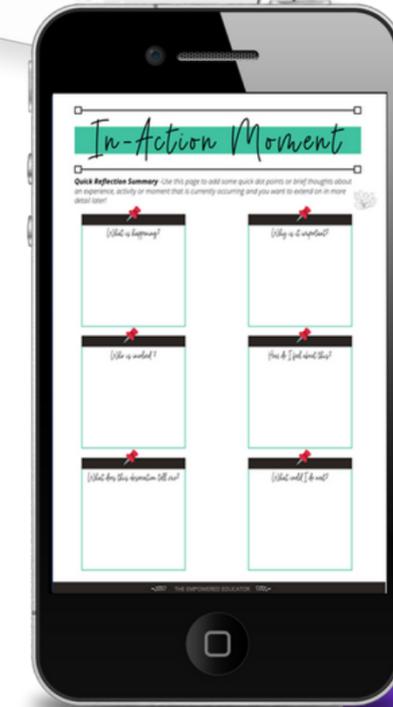


What story do the photos tell us?

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**How will you show evidence you reflect, self assess and set goals for improvement consistently?**

**How will you use the information?**



## REFLECTION PLANNER (Multi-Age Group)

	<p>THIS WEEK'S REFLECTIONS &amp; OBSERVATIONS THAT MAY BE USED FOR PLANNING THIS WEEK.</p> <p>Is there something you need to try again, do differently, observe, extend upon or...</p>
<p>ITS</p>	<p>ACTIVITY GUIDES NEEDED FOR THIS PLAN</p> <p>Add numbers of the activity plans required for quick reference</p>

**5 REFLECTING ON ME!**  
EDUCATOR'S MONTHLY ACTION GOAL

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ EDUCATOR: \_\_\_\_\_

THE GOAL I MOST WANT TO WORK TOWARDS & ACHIEVE IS:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

HOW CAN I MAKE IT HAPPEN THIS MONTH? WHAT DO I NEED?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

WHO CAN SUPPORT ME?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Empowered Ed Training Review & Reflection Form**

Name of Educator: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Training Session Attended: \_\_\_\_\_

**Reflection Prompts**

1. Why was this topic of interest to me?

2. Questions and/or challenges this training session raised for me.

3. What was something new I learnt through this experience?

4. What changes/actions I want to try from...

5. Where could I find more information that will help me take action?

6. Who could mentor or help me to access this information? How?

I will complete these goals by: \_\_\_\_\_

I know when they are completed when... \_\_\_\_\_

**Personal Development Focus:** \_\_\_\_\_

DATE CREATED: \_\_\_\_\_ EDUCATOR: \_\_\_\_\_ PLAN NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

What help or approach will I need to achieve this learning goal? (Support, training, mentorship, reading, research?)

How will this help my growth as an educator?

How will I know when I have achieved my goal?

**Weekly Reflections**

Week Ending \_\_\_\_\_

What worked this week? Why? What could I do again? What did the children's voices tell me?

Possible ideas for next week

What didn't work as well this week? What could I do less of? How will I manage next time?

Environment Changes Needed

**Everyday Conversations**

Quick notes from my day to day informal conversations with team members.

What were the highlights of this conversation?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Reflection Review**

**Quick Reflection Summary** - When you think about your reflection focus areas over the past month what do they tell you? Spend 5 minutes to answer the questions below and this will give you a brief summary to build from.

What did I learn about myself this month? How did I look after my wellbeing?

What was something new or interesting I discovered in terms of professional development? Is there something I have identified I want to learn more about?

What do my observations and analysis of learning from this month tell me about how to plan ahead for next month?

In what way were my choices determined by the expectations of my early learning service / leader / coordinator or director?



**MY CURIOSITY CARD**

I KNOW these things About...

I See....

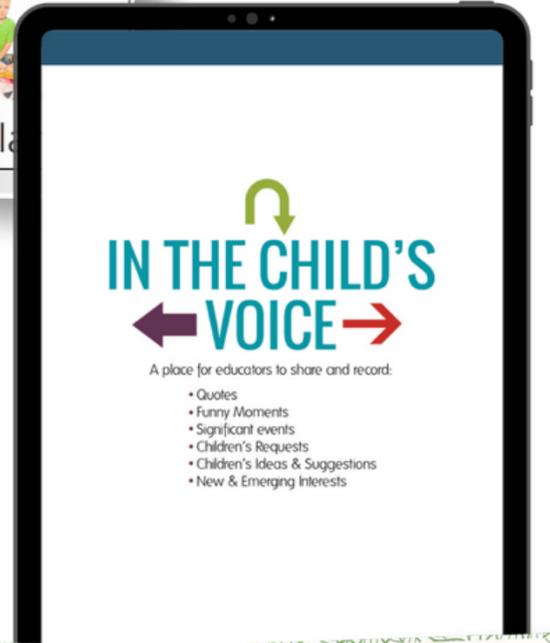
I Think....

I Want to Know....



**Outdoor Investigations**

What did you see?  
Draw it below!



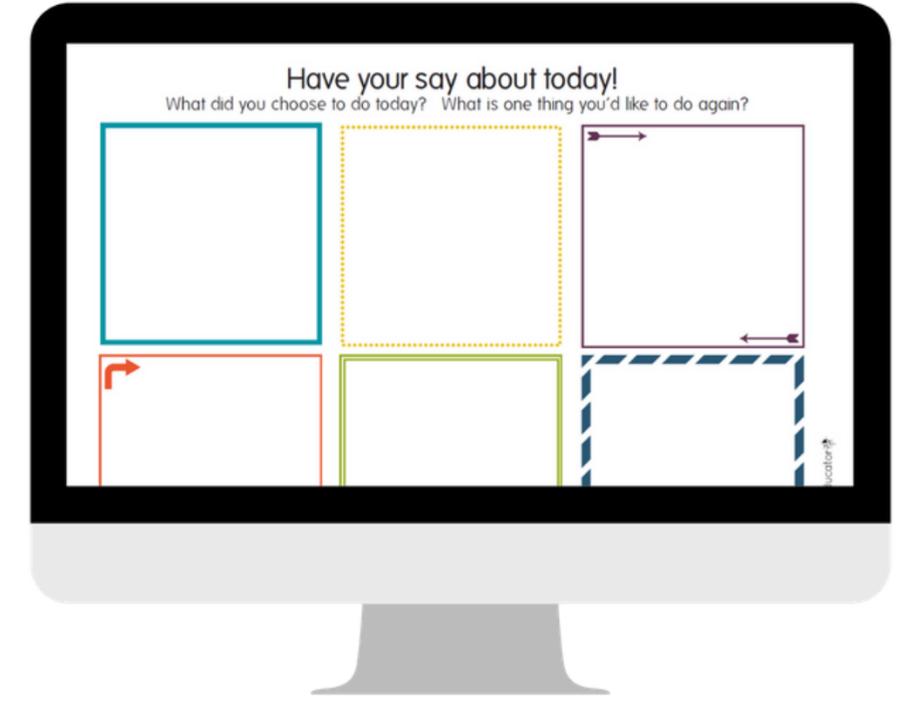
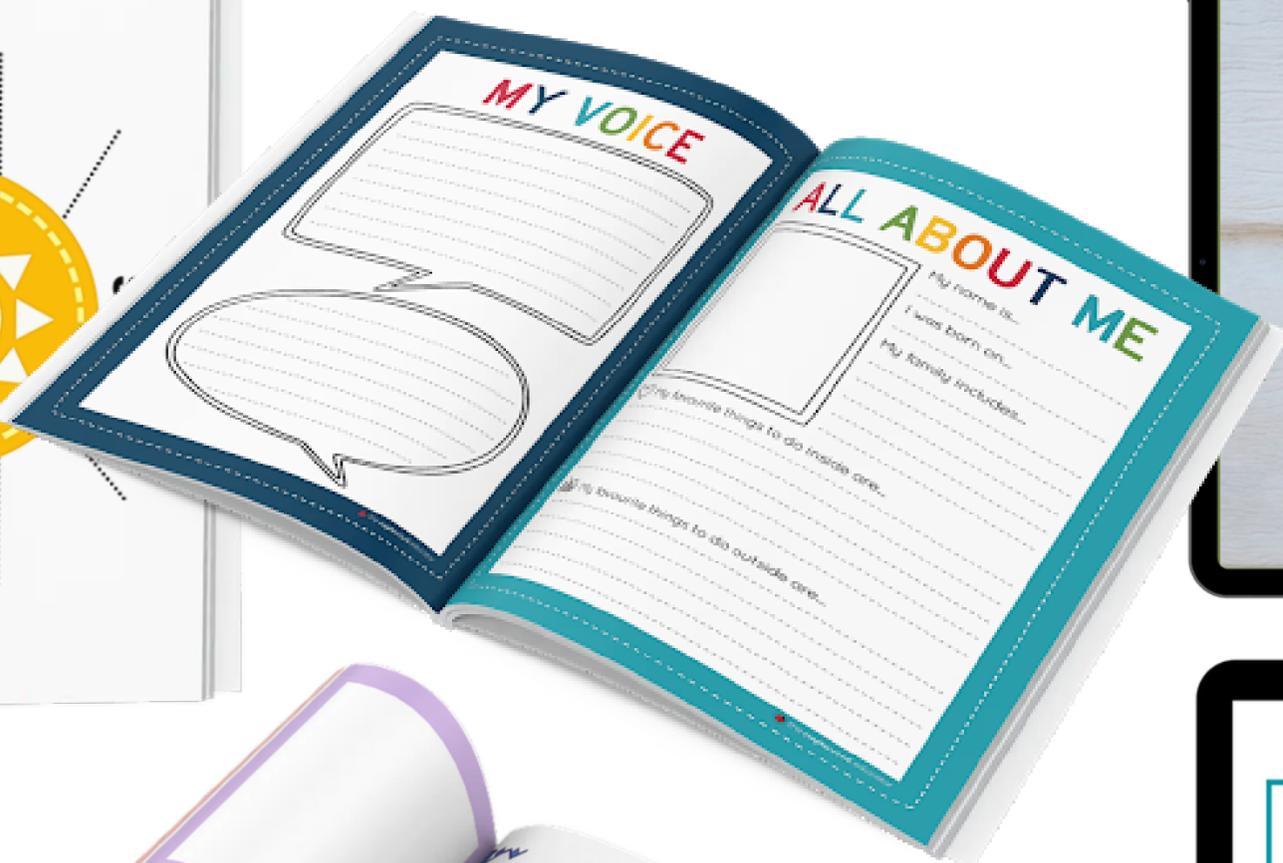
**How will you provide opportunities to incorporate the child's voice into your planning cycle?**

Today I imagined I was...



 MY DAY AT PLAY TODAY





**INDIVIDUAL LEARNING – ANALYSIS AND FORWARD PLANNING RECORD**

Date: 20/10/14      Child's Name: Tara

Format & Date	Analysis of Learning	Future Planning	Program/Plan Date	Planned Activity Evaluation
Daily Reflection "Our Day"	From this observation I note the following: Tara is showing a real interest in problem solving and wanting to find out how things work for herself.	<b>Possible Extension Activities:</b> Tray of magnetic and non-magnetic items – investigate & discuss	24.9.14 2.10.14	11.10.14 Tara spent quite a lot of time working out which objects on the tray were able to be picked up by the magnet and asked many questions about why some objects didn't 'stick' to the magnet.
Formal Obs Or Learning Story	She showed a willingness and concentration to stick with a task until completion  She was able to use descriptive language to convey her thoughts  She used reflective thinking to consider why things might happen a number of times	Use internet videos to explore use of magnets and magnetic fields  Intentional Teaching – using Scales and teddy bear counters to explore balance and weight- <b>problem solving skills</b>		She didn't show a great deal of interest in the internet videos. Need to find simpler videos relevant her age.
Photo Collage Obs 18/9/14	She was able to coordinate both hands to Problem solve, sort and sequence.  She thought about a way to extend the activity and challenge her thinking.			She absolutely loved the scale activity and spent time looking for other objects around the house to use in the scales. Used language to express her thoughts and work through problem solving processes.



## GOALS FOR [REDACTED]

### LEAD EDUCATOR SUMMARY

WHAT DO I NEED AS AN INDIVIDUAL IN THE NEXT 3 MONTHS?

---

HOW WILL YOU SUPPORT MY FAMILY & CULTURE?

---

HOW WILL YOU COMMUNICATE REGULARLY WITH MY FAMILY?

---

 6.

Curiosity Spark: \_\_\_\_\_

Curiosity Sparks	Incidental Learning	Children's Voices & Interests	Intentional Teaching Moments
What do we want to extend on?	What did I observe?	What did they tell me?	What learning took place?
How can we do this?	What did we learn?	Where could this lead?	Can I extend on this? How?

**Week 1 Program**      Extending the Learning  
Week Ending: \_\_\_\_\_

**How will you record & use information gathered from your observations, analysis of learning and communication to inform your forward planning?**

Weekly Curiosity Spark: What can we see from our Earth?

<b>Program Reflections</b> <i>What worked? What Didn't? Why?</i> <i>What would I do differently next time?</i>	<b>Child Observations</b> <i>Ready for an Evaluation Quickie</i>	<b>Family Feedback</b> <i>Conversations, Collaboration &amp; Comments</i>	<b>Future Curiosity Sparks</b> <i>What interests or learning evolved this week that we could extend on next?</i>
--	---	--	---

**Mini Critical Reflection**

Something new I learnt this month & how it is useful...

→

Something I want to change or do better & why...

→

Something I need to know more about & how I'll do it

**Program Evaluation**    Review & Reflect  
 Week Ending: \_\_\_\_\_

  
**CURRENT**  
 Forward Planning

Future Planning	Program/Plan Date
<b>Possible Extension Activities:</b>	<b>24.9.14</b>
Tray of magnetic and non magnetic items – investigate & discuss	<b>2. 10.14</b>
Use internet videos to explore use of magnets and magnetic fields	
Intentional Teaching – using Scales and teddy bear counters to explore balance and weight	

### Observations & Analysis Tool

Use the questions below to help ensure your observations are useful & time efficient

Questions to consider...	Tick if applicable
Did you look for and record only moments that stood out to you for some reason? A moment that made you excited/concerned/surprised/confused?	
Did you listen and record the child's authentic voice and what you actually saw take place (not your own interpretation) while making notes?	
Did you use the format/template/style that suits the situation, the time you had to observe and also your particular skill and comfort level?	
Did you incorporate visual, digital or audio tools/apps to record moments quickly and save you time so you could continue to be in the moment?	
Did you ask yourself if you can plan future experiences after evaluating this observation?	
Did you ask yourself if there anything in this observation that concerns you from a developmental perspective?	
Did you identify a child's strengths and/or interests from each observation?	
Did you use your observations to consider how you could further support and extend the child's/groups' interest/strength/learning journey?	
Did you use the information above to forward plan onto your next program?	

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**How will you consistently review & assess a child's progress on their learning journey & share this information with parents & carers?**

**Assessment of Learning Summary**

Child Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Educator: \_\_\_\_\_

Summary of progress for dates from: \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

Educator Reflections on Learning Outcome 1  
Children have a strong sense of identity

Educator Reflections on Learning Outcome 2  
Children are connected with and contribute to their world

Educator Reflections on Learning Outcome 3  
Children have a strong sense of wellbeing

Educator Reflections on Learning Outcome 4  
Children are involved and confident learners

Educator Reflections on Learning Outcome 5  
Children are effective communicators

New goals to support further learning  
What learning and development are we aiming to support & extend during this next period?

**Learning & Development Journey**

Record of ongoing assessment evidence collected by educator.

Child Name: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_ Educator: \_\_\_\_\_

Assessment Sources/Methods Used <small>Complete only the sections that apply to your programming.</small>	Last Completed <small>Add dates as you complete assessment tools.</small>
Child's Work Samples collected <small>(Actual work, photos, analysis of learning that took place)</small>	
Family Communication & Input Recorded <small>(Note where recorded and any actions that related to the input)</small>	
Developmental Milestones Reached & Recorded	

**Significant Moments**  
(Note where recorded – program, diary, reflections, obs)

**Learning Assessments/Summaries**  
(Record when last completed)

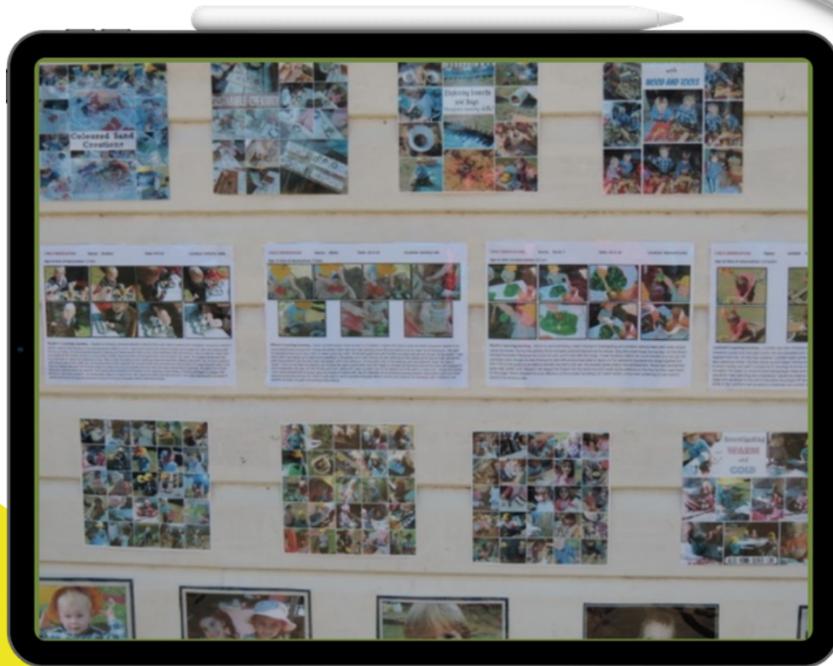
**Weekly or Daily Reflections**  
(Note if you shared something significant regarding this child's learning journey in your reflections.)

Use this form to help you organise your various documentation sources and methods – list evidence source and where it is stored in the left column and when last updated or modified in the right hand column.

When you need to complete a summative assessment throughout the year using all of your previous documentation, assessments and analysis of learning or to show evidence that you are documenting the ongoing progress of a child's learning journey you will be able to refer back to this record and know where everything is. This is only to be used as an organisational tool to help you keep a record of your documentation sources – just add brief notes or a dot point (not write actual observations etc.).

*It's meant to save you time in the long run – not add to your workload!*





**How will you use the information gathered from each step of the cycle to help you write your program?**

Looking Forward to .....

Reflections from this program plan  
(What worked, what didn't, why? Children's voices- what did they tell me?)

Ideas for next plan:  
(Ideas for extensions of learning from the observations, reflections and children's interests noted during this program)

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### PLANNER (Multi-Age Group)

THIS WEEK'S REFLECTIONS & OBSERVATIONS THAT MAY INFLUENCE PLANNING THIS WEEK.  
Is there something you need to try again, do differently, observe, extend upon or...

ACTIVITY GUIDES NEEDED FOR THIS PLAN  
Add numbers of the activity plans required for quick reference

**3** LOOKING FORWARD - ANALYSE & PLAN

CHILD'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
D.O.B: \_\_\_\_\_ EDUCATOR: \_\_\_\_\_

WHAT WAS THE LEARNING GOAL THIS MONTH?  
\_\_\_\_\_

OBSERVATION COMPLETED - WHAT FORMAT & WHEN?  
\_\_\_\_\_

WHAT LEARNING TOOK PLACE? WHAT WAS SIGNIFICANT?  
\_\_\_\_\_

NEXT STEPS FORWARD - WHAT CAN I DO TO EXTEND, CHALLENGE OR SUPPORT THIS LEARNING?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Planner Reflection

Curiosity Spark

Incidental Learning

Week 1 Program

Curiosity Spark: What do we want to extend this?

Incidental Learning: What did I observe?

Child's Voice: What do they think?

Week 1 Program: Coloured Star Sorting, Expanding the Learning, Sun Spinning, Clay Concentration, Dough Moon Phases, Native Star Winds, Moon Painting, Star Chocolate Dipper, Moon Cranes, Starry Skies, Cloud Chasers, Starry Skies, What can we see from our Earth?

### WHAT DO THE BOXES MEAN?

Use this guide to help you understand what each box on the planner is used for and what you might add if creating your own plan using the blank template.

<b>EXPLORING OUR WORLD</b> Activities in this section include indoor and outdoor play, use of natural materials, investigation of the plant and animal life in the care area, sustainability and respect for the environment, sensory experiences and more.	<b>INVITING THE IMAGINATION IN</b> Activities in this section include indoor and outdoor play, challenges for gross & fine motor muscles, use of real life materials for props, sensory experiences, opportunities for creative and dramatic self expression, communication, role play, group play, problem solving and more.	<b>LET'S GET MOVING</b> Activities in this section include indoor and outdoor play, challenges for gross & fine motor muscles, use of recycled and natural materials for obstacles, sensory experiences, opportunities for problem solving & teamwork, communication, role play, group play and musical discovery.	<b>CREATIVE &amp; SENSORY PLAY</b> Activities in this section include indoor and outdoor play, use of natural materials, sensory experiences, opportunities for creative expression, communication, role play, group play, problem solving and more.
<b>FINE MOTOR/MANIPULATIVE PLAY</b> Activities in this section include indoor and outdoor play, challenges for fine motor muscles, use of natural materials, sensory experiences, opportunities for creative and cognitive self expression, communication, investigation, problem solving and more.	<b>CONNECTING THROUGH COMMUNICATION</b> Activities in this section include indoor and outdoor play, use of natural materials for conversation prompts, sensory experiences, opportunities for creative and dramatic self expression, music, language & communication, role play, group play, problem solving and more.	<b>ENCOURAGING IDENTITY &amp; INDEPENDENCE</b> Activities in this section include indoor and outdoor play, use of real life materials for props, sensory experiences, opportunities for creative and dramatic self expression, communication, exploring of emotions & senses, role play, group play, problem solving and more.	<b>EVERY DAY ESSENTIALS</b> On your blank program template, you can add any toys, materials etc. that you have available even if they are not on the list.
<b>INTENTIONAL TEACHING FOCUS</b> Jot down a few intentional teaching ideas that you would like to incorporate into the activities you have planned for the current week. Keep them simple, use information from observations and modify to suit group needs.	<b>SPONTANEOUS MOMENTS &amp; LEARNING</b> Use this box to add to your completed program template as the week goes on. Note those activities, emerging interests, or moments that you feel were special or meaningful for some reason - or just something you would like to extend on or do again another week.	<b>FEEDBACK / VOICES</b> Use this box to add in any parent/educator feedback during the week. You know where to find it! You could also use this box to add in children's voices/input here.	

### OUR CURRENT PROGRAM OF PLAY AND LEARNING THIS WEEK

6 - 12 Years Planner

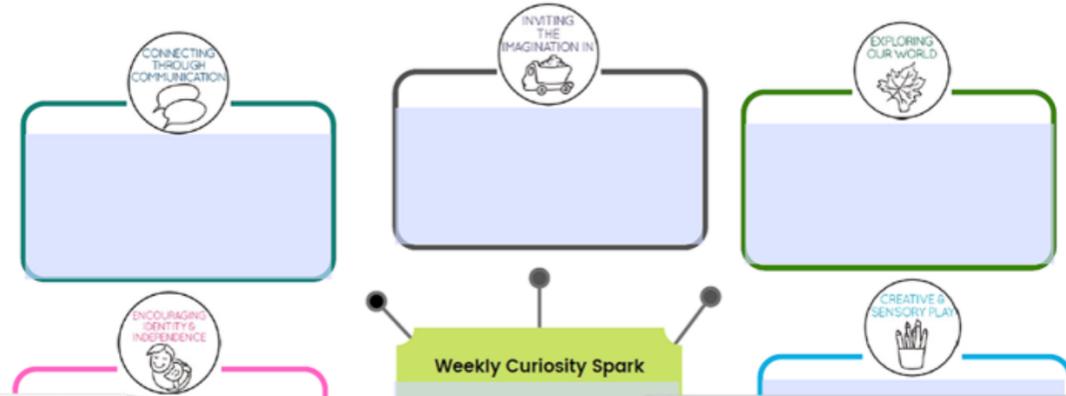
Week Beginning: \_\_\_\_\_

EXPLORING OUR WORLD	INVITING THE IMAGINATION IN	LET'S GET MOVING	CREATIVE & SENSORY PLAY
CONNECTING THROUGH COMMUNICATION	ENCOURAGING IDENTITY & INDEPENDENCE	EVERY DAY ESSENTIALS	
TEACHING FOCUS QUESTIONS	SPONTANEOUS MOMENTS & LEARNING	FEEDBACK / VOICES	

### Week 2 Program

Activities & Experiences for Active Learning

This Program Begins: \_\_\_\_\_ Ends: \_\_\_\_\_



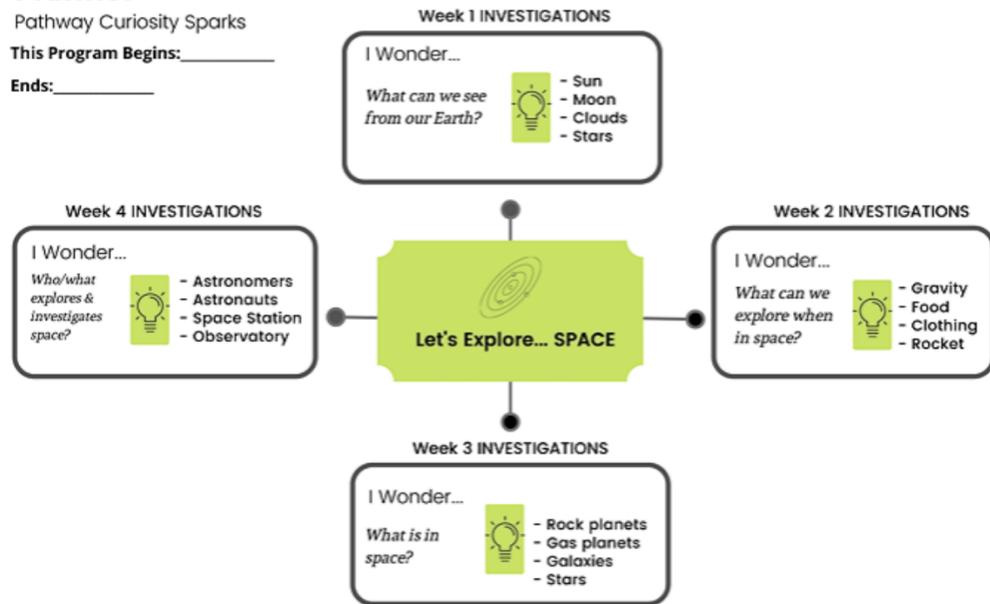
### Monthly Program Planner

Pathway Curiosity Sparks

This Program Begins: \_\_\_\_\_

Ends: \_\_\_\_\_

What will ignite our curiosity and learning this month?



## How to Write A Program That Connects Your Planning Cycle

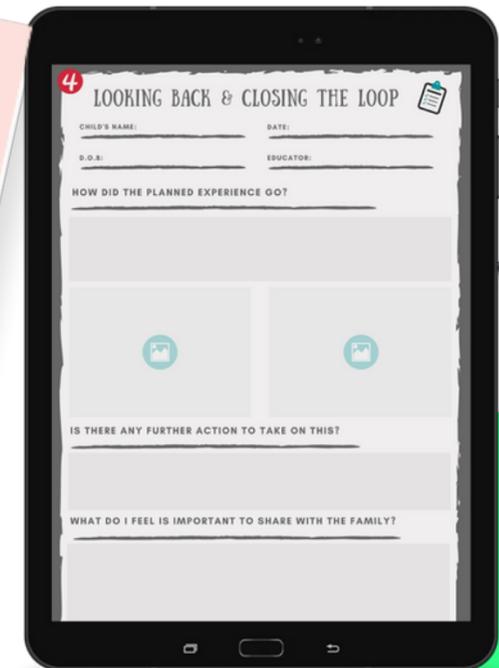
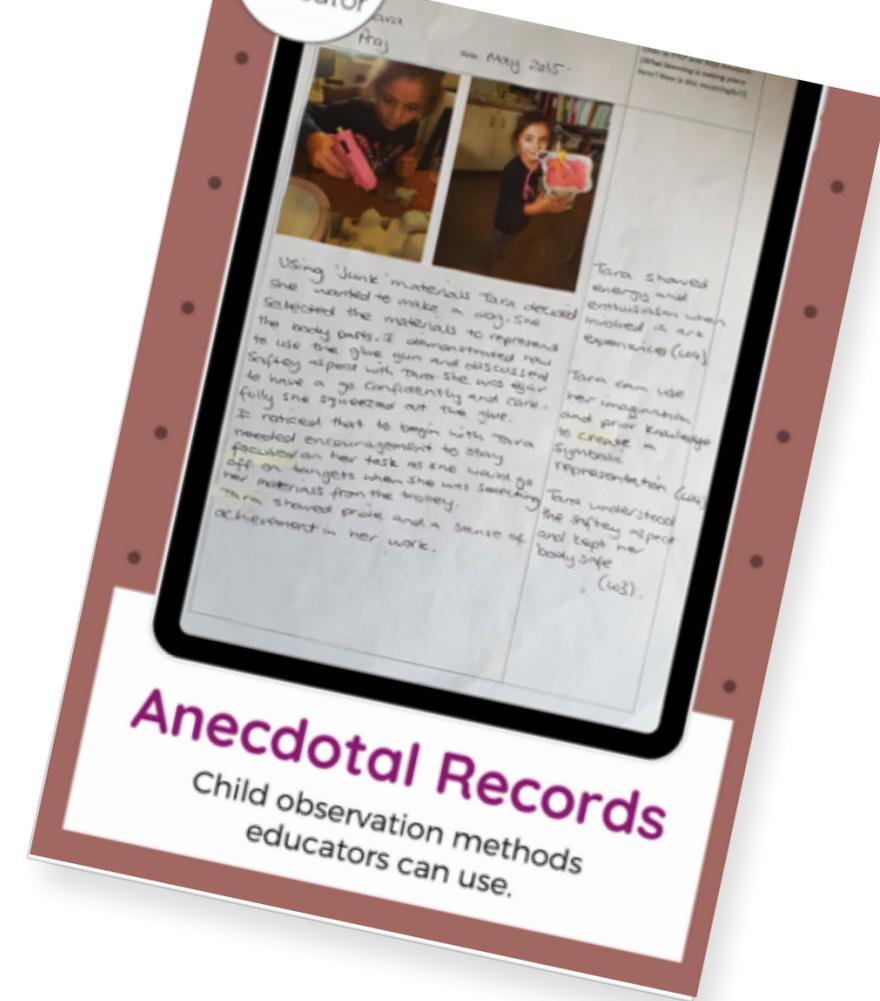
A Quick Win Toolbox Training Session for Early Years Educators



With Jodie Clarke - The Empowered Educator

MacBook Air

**How will you know if your forward planning activities and program are achieving desired results/meeting goals? How will you know if you need to do more?**



1. **Format & Date**      2. Date: 20/10/14      3. Child's Name:      4. **Program/Plan Date**      5. **Planned Activity Evaluation**

Format & Date	Analysis of Learning	Future Planning	Program/Plan Date	Planned Activity Evaluation
Daily Reflection "Our Day"	From this observation I note the following: Tara is showing a real interest in problem solving and wanting to find out how things work for herself. She showed a willingness and concentration to stick with a task until completion	<b>Possible Extension Activities:</b> Tray of magnetic and non-magnetic items – investigate & discuss Use internet videos to explore use of magnets and magnetic fields	24.9.14 2. 10.14	11.10.14 Tara spent quite a lot of time working out which objects on the tray were able to be picked up by the magnet and asked many questions about why some objects didn't 'stick' to the magnet.
Formal Obs Or Learning Story	She was able to use descriptive language To convey her thoughts She used reflective thinking to consider why things might happen a number of times	Intentional Teaching – using Scales and teddy bear counters to explore balance and weight- <b>problem solving skills</b>		She didn't show a great deal of interest in the internet videos. Need to find simpler videos relevant her age.  She absolutely loved the scale activity and spent time looking for other objects around the house to use in the scales. Used
Photo Collage Obs 18/9/14	She was able to coordinate both hands to Problem solve, sort and sequence. She thought about a way to extend the activity and challenge her			

Curiosity Spark:

Curiosity Sparks	Incidental Learning	Children's Voices & Interests	Intentional Teaching Moments
What do we want to extend on?	What did I observe?	What did they tell me?	What learning took place?
How can we do this?	What did we learn?	Where could this lead?	Can I extend on this? How?

**Week 1 Program**      Extending the Learning      Week Ending: \_\_\_\_\_

Weekly Curiosity Spark: What can we see from our Earth?

Program Reflections What worked? What Didn't? Why? What would I do differently next time?	Child Observations Ready for an Evaluation Quickie	Family Feedback Conversations, Collaboration & Comments	Future Curiosity Sparks What interests or learning evolved this week that we could extend on next?
---	---	--	---

Mini Critical Reflection

Something new I learnt this month & how it is useful...	Something I want to change or do better & why...	Something I need to know more about & how I'll do it
---	--	--

Program/Plan Date	Planned Activity Evaluation
24.9.14 2. 10.14	11.10.14 Tara spent quite a lot of time working out which objects on the tray were able to be picked up by the magnet and asked many questions about why some objects didn't 'stick' to the magnet.  She didn't show a great deal of interest in the internet videos. Need to find simpler videos relevant her age.  She absolutely loved the scale activity and spent

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**TAKE ACTION**

WHAT WILL I DO NOW?

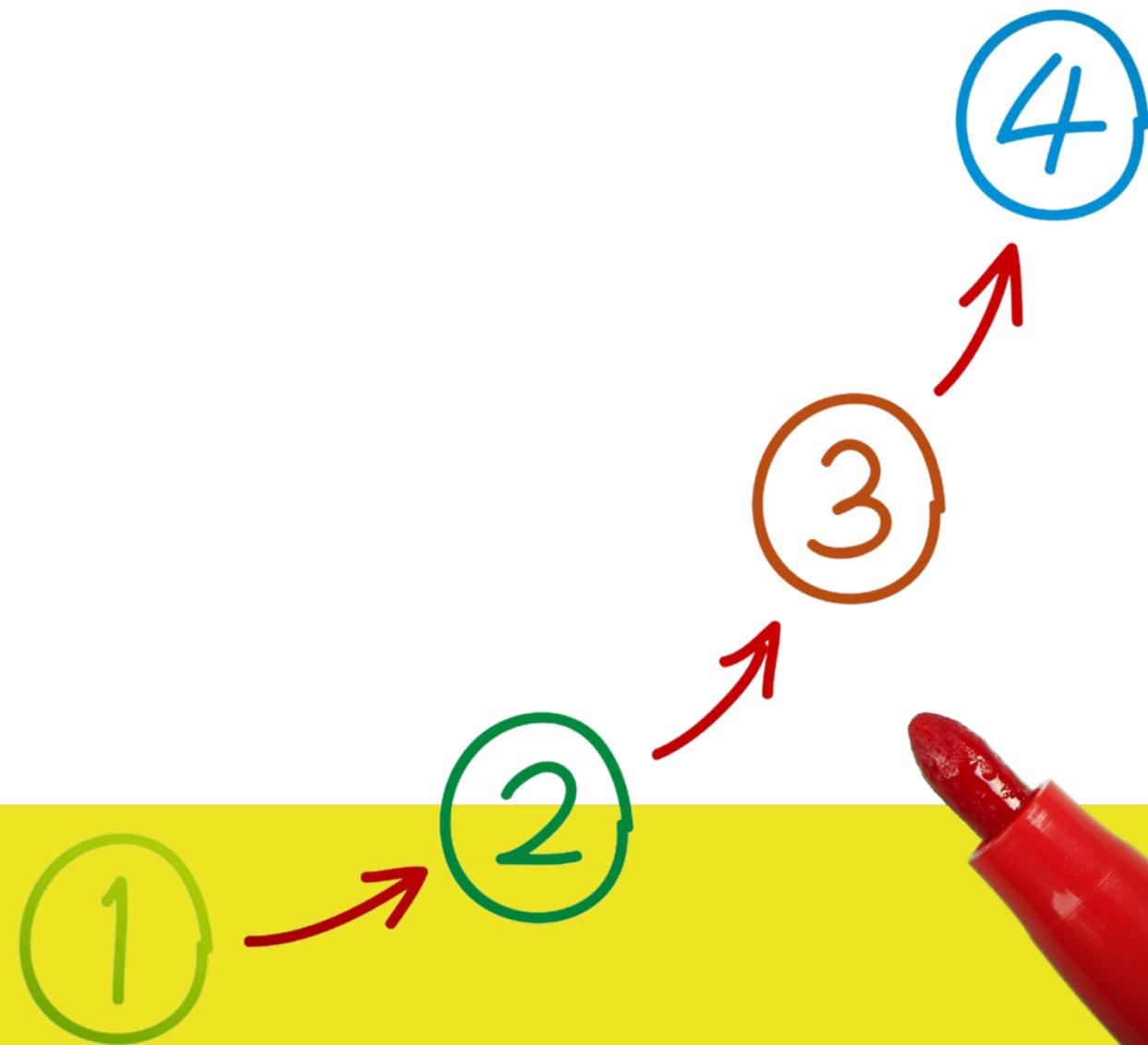
MY GOALS OR CHANGES TO MAKE	TIMEFRAME

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# CYCLE CONFIDENCE BOOSTER

## SECRET #4 - FOLLOW A **FAMILIAR** **FRAMEWORK**

Take the time to first set up a realistic and easy to follow framework that ensures you are able to routinely cover all steps of the planning cycle.



**Setting up a planning cycle framework to follow makes meeting planning requirements and writing an engaging program a simpler, more effective process that ultimately saves you time and boosts confidence in your skills and knowledge.**



Weekly Curiosity Spark: What can we see from our Earth?

**Program Reflections**  
What worked? What Didn't? Why?  
What would I do differently next time?

**Child Observations**  
Ready for an  
Evaluation Quickie

**Family Feedback**  
Conversations, Collaborations  
& Comments

**Future Curiosity Spark**

Mini Critical Reflection

Something new I learnt this month & how it is useful...

Something I want to change do better & why...

Week 1 - Completed Child Observations - Evaluation Quickies

For Week Ending: \_\_\_\_\_

**CHILD NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

What learning took place?

What strengths, interests or concerns can I identify?

**CHILD NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

What learning took place?

What strengths, interests or concerns can I identify?

Can I plan future experiences from this knowledge?

How could I further support & extend this child's learning?

Curiosity Spark:

<b>Curiosity Sparks</b> What do we want to do on?	<b>Incidental Learning</b> What did I observe?	<b>Children's Voices &amp; Interests</b> What did they tell me?	<b>Intentional Teaching Moments</b> What learning took place?
How do we do this?	What did we learn?	Where could this lead?	Can I extend on this? How?

OUR CURRENT PROGRAM OF PLAY AND LEARNING

Multi Age Dates: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>EXPLORING OUR WORLD</b>	<b>INVITING THE IMAGINATION IN</b>	<b>LET'S GET MOVING</b>	<b>CREATIVE &amp; SENSORY PLAY</b>
<b>FINE MOTOR/ MANIPULATIVE PLAY</b>	<b>CONNECTING THROUGH COMMUNICATION</b>	<b>ENCOURAGING IDENTITY &amp; INDEPENDENCE</b>	<b>EVERY DAY ESSENTIALS</b>
<b>INTENTIONAL TEACHING FOCUS SUGGESTIONS</b>	<b>SPONTANEOUS MOMENTS &amp; LEARNING</b>	<b>FEEDBACK / VOICES</b>	

the *answer* educator

Monthly Program Planner

Pathway Curiosity Sparks  
This Program Begins: \_\_\_\_\_  
Ends: \_\_\_\_\_

What will ignite our curiosity and learning this month?

**Let's Explore... SPACE**

**Week 1 INVESTIGATIONS**  
I Wonder...  
What can we see from our Earth?  
- Sun  
- Moon  
- Clouds  
- Stars

**Week 2 INVESTIGATIONS**  
I Wonder...  
What can we explore when in space?  
- Gravity  
- Food  
- Clothing  
- Rocket

**Week 3 INVESTIGATIONS**  
I Wonder...  
What is in space?  
- Rock planets  
- Gas planets  
- Galaxies  
- Stars

**Week 4 INVESTIGATIONS**  
I Wonder...  
Who/what explores & investigates space?  
- Astronomers  
- Astronauts  
- Space Station  
- Observatory



# WHY WILL A FRAMEWORK SAVE YOU TIME?



- You will know what step comes next and what action to take to meet that step.
- Gives you something to follow that has been adapted to meet your needs so it becomes a habit you can create and stick with more easily.
- You will be able to set goals and allocate realistic timeframes for each task.
- Knowing your process will help you prioritise and avoid unnecessary writing.
- A framework allows you to visualise all of the stages involved so you can organise your folders etc to correspond.

**1** **INDIVIDUAL FOCUS**  
MONTHLY ACTION GOAL FOR:

CHILD: \_\_\_\_\_ EDUCATOR: \_\_\_\_\_

WHAT LEARNING OR DEVELOPMENTAL AREA WILL I FOCUS ON FOR THIS CHILD THIS MONTH?

\_\_\_\_\_

HOW CAN I MAKE IT HAPPEN THIS MONTH? WHAT DO I NEED TO DO?

\_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF "LOOKING FORWARD" PLAN THIS GOAL IS LINKED TO?

\_\_\_\_\_

**2** **CHILD OBSERVATION**

CHILD'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

D.O.B: \_\_\_\_\_ EDUCATOR: \_\_\_\_\_

WHAT DID YOU SEE ME DO TODAY?

\_\_\_\_\_

WHY WAS THIS SIGNIFICANT OR OF INTEREST TO YOU?

\_\_\_\_\_



**3** **LOOKING FORWARD - ANALYSE & PLAN** 

CHILD'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
D.O.B: \_\_\_\_\_ EDUCATOR: \_\_\_\_\_

WHAT WAS THE LEARNING GOAL THIS MONTH?  
\_\_\_\_\_

OBSERVATION COMPLETED - WHAT FORMAT & WHEN?  
\_\_\_\_\_

WHAT LEARNING TOOK PLACE? WHAT WAS SIGNIFICANT?  
\_\_\_\_\_

NEXT STEPS FORWARD - WHAT CAN I DO TO EXTEND, CHALLENGE OR SUPPORT THIS LEARNING?  
\_\_\_\_\_



**4** **LOOKING BACK & CLOSING THE LOOP** 

CHILD'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
D.O.B: \_\_\_\_\_ EDUCATOR: \_\_\_\_\_

HOW DID THE PLANNED EXPERIENCE GO?  
\_\_\_\_\_

IS THERE ANY FURTHER ACTION TO TAKE ON THIS?  
\_\_\_\_\_

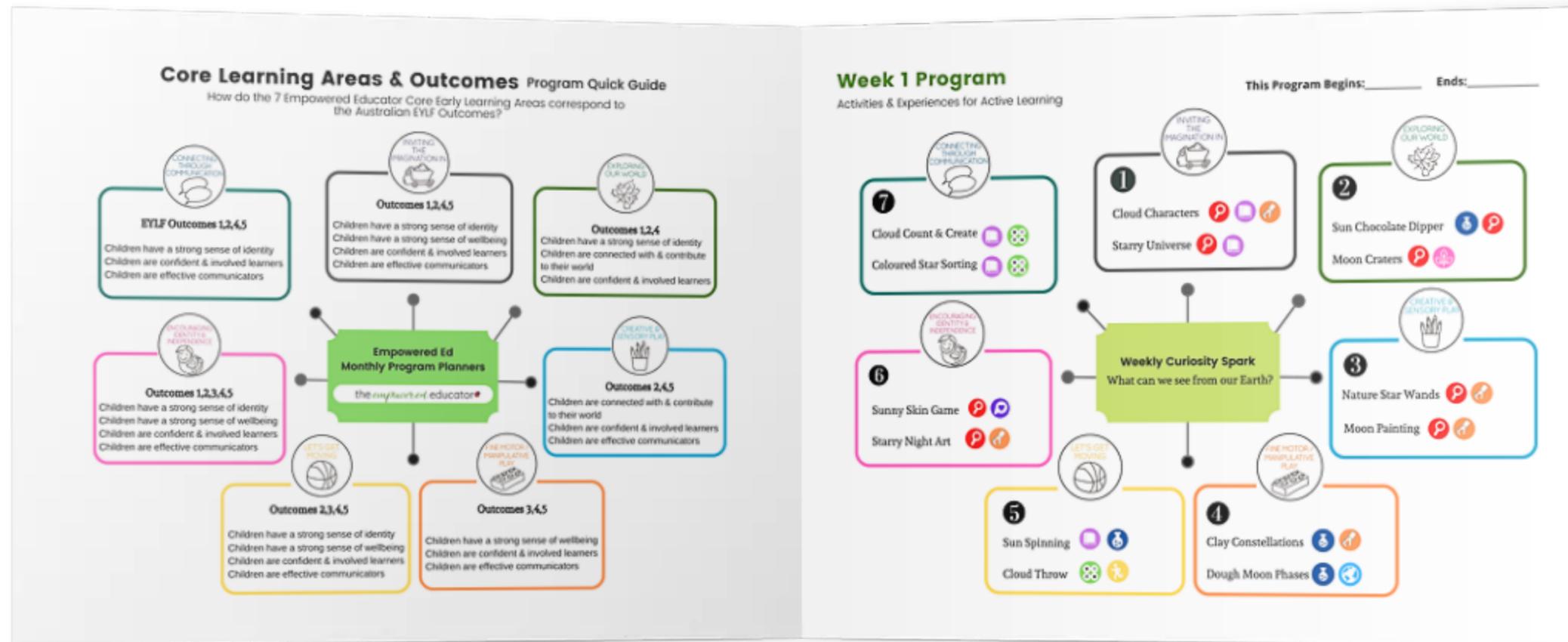
WHAT DO I FEEL IS IMPORTANT TO SHARE WITH THE FAMILY?  
\_\_\_\_\_



# WHY WILL A FRAMEWORK SAVE YOU TIME?



- Your framework will consist of tools and templates that you feel confident with using...because you fit the pieces together while building.
- Decreases episodes of procrastination because you don't need to figure out the why and how...you just follow your steps.
- Following a framework provides opportunities across all steps to include the child's voice into your documentation.
- It helps you to make a child's learning 'visible' and 'understandable' to others...including you.



A realistic planning cycle framework supports educators to value their time by only using documentation as a meaningful way to gain a deeper understanding of each child and how to assess and extend their journey... it informs your program and makes it a whole lot easier to write each week.

The alternative is when you are always struggling to catch up and scramble to get all of those bits and pieces of documentation finished just so you can show someone you ticked off a box or two and can now get back to the 'real' work.

**THAT'S WHEN YOU GET FRUSTRATED BECAUSE YOU ALWAYS SEEM TO BE WRITING.**





**Can you see why building your own framework now that you know what you need to do, when and why would make things a whole lot easier?**

**Yes or No?**

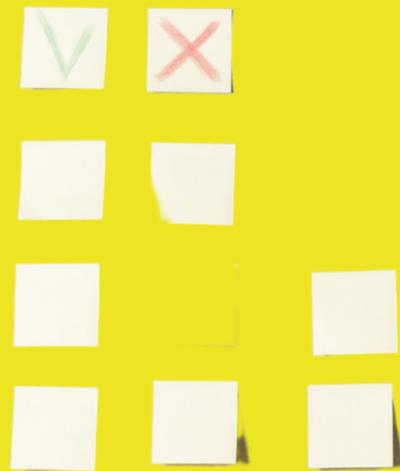
**I want you to try and imagine the sense of relief you might feel when you can see a clear beginning and end that links all the steps together into a cycle you can repeat consistently....and you know that it's not a waste of your time - there is a clear purpose to your actions.**

**Create visual tools and attend interesting training sessions that help you increase your understanding of how each step flows and why they support the development of a program.**

**HOW DO YOU  
TAKE ACTION &  
GET STARTED?**



# HOW DO YOU TAKE ACTION & GET STARTED?



**Decide on the resources you want to use to stock your planning toolkit & fulfil each step.**

- How will they connect and support each other so you are collecting meaningful information?
- Do they work with your strengths?
- Are you able to modify easily if needed?
- Do you understand how to use them so you aren't wasting time?

# HOW DO YOU TAKE ACTION & GET STARTED?

## Know how to confidently use those resources to ...

- Collect information about a child through observations
- Analyse the learning by drawing on your knowledge and experiences
- Plan forward for future learning opportunities & the prep you will need to do for this
- Engage with the children by using the activities and experiences you have planned
- Seek out, listen to and incorporate their voice into your overall program
- Reflect and evaluate practice, program and a child's responsiveness.



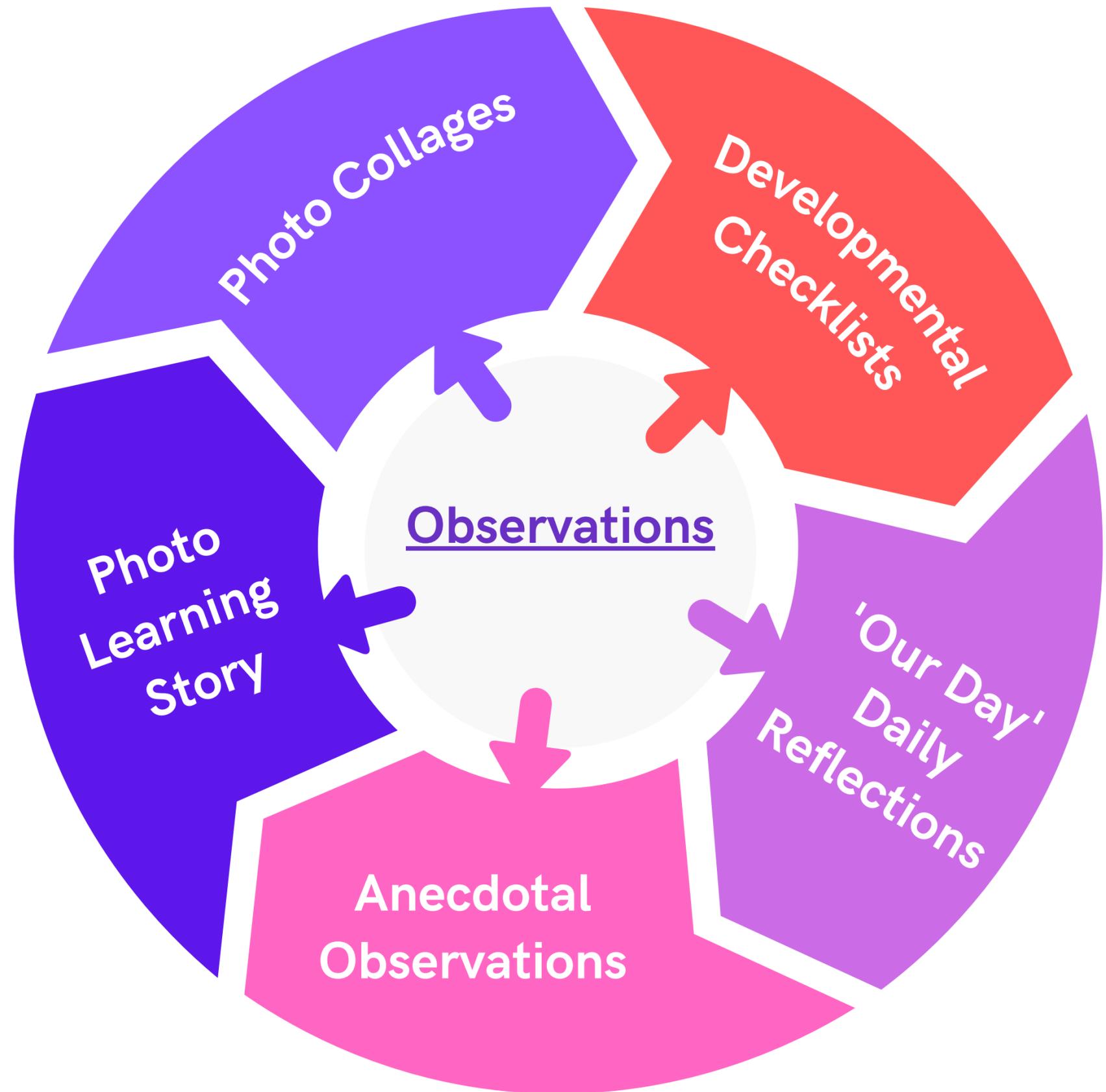
**Write or draw the steps of your planning process out (*including every little piece that you need to strengthen your framework - don't just write the step!*) then go and try it out for at least 2 cycles.**

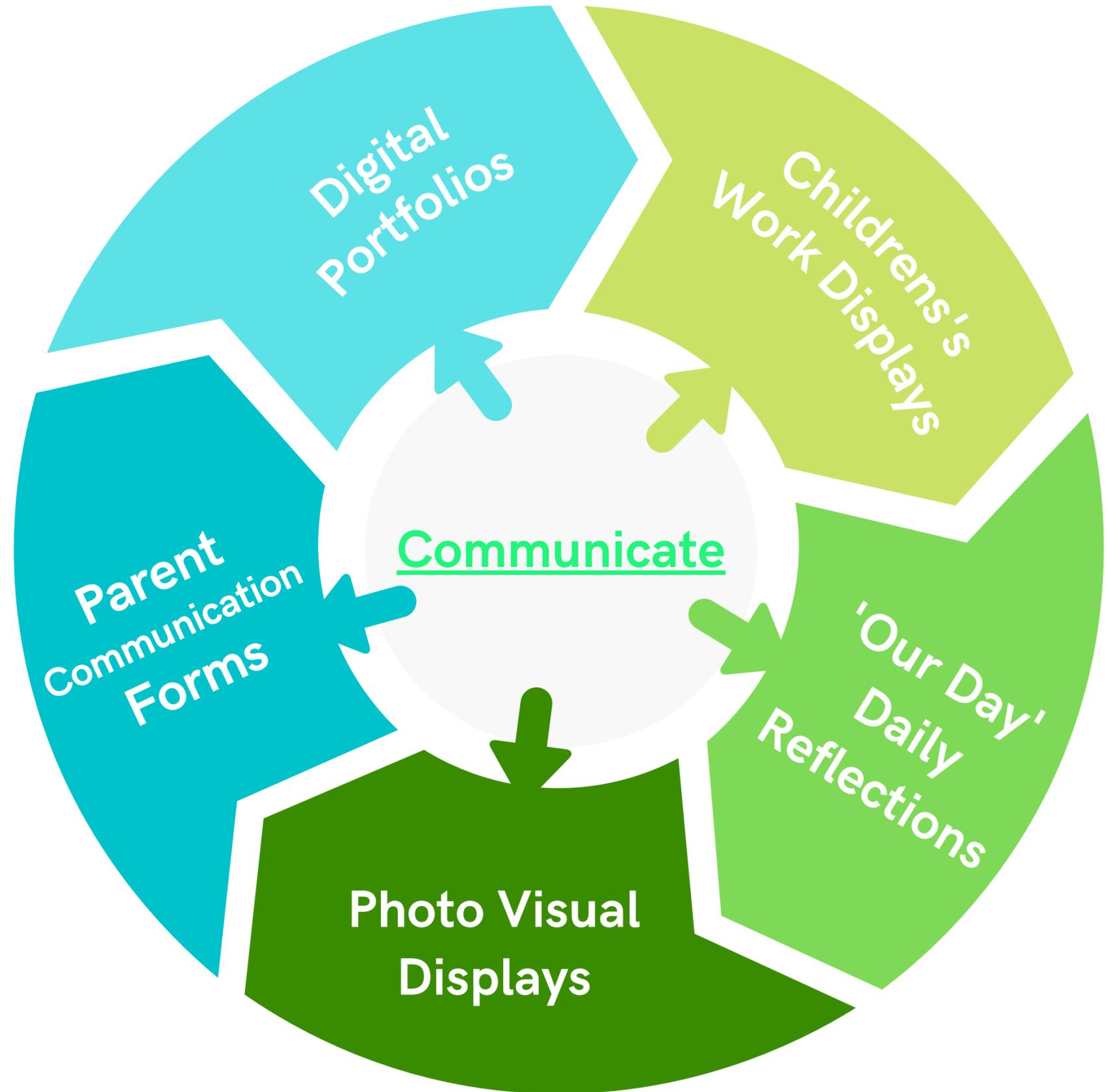
If something doesn't work, is taking too much time or doesn't feel very meaningful to you, it's time to modify, change or make a small tweak.

# WHAT IF I CHANGE MY ROLE, WORK WITH A DIFFERENT AGE, FOLLOW/DON'T FOLLOW THE EYLF?

Those variables aren't your excuse to hold back on building a framework or core process you can use for many years, they are simply procrastination triggers and they aren't helpful to you.

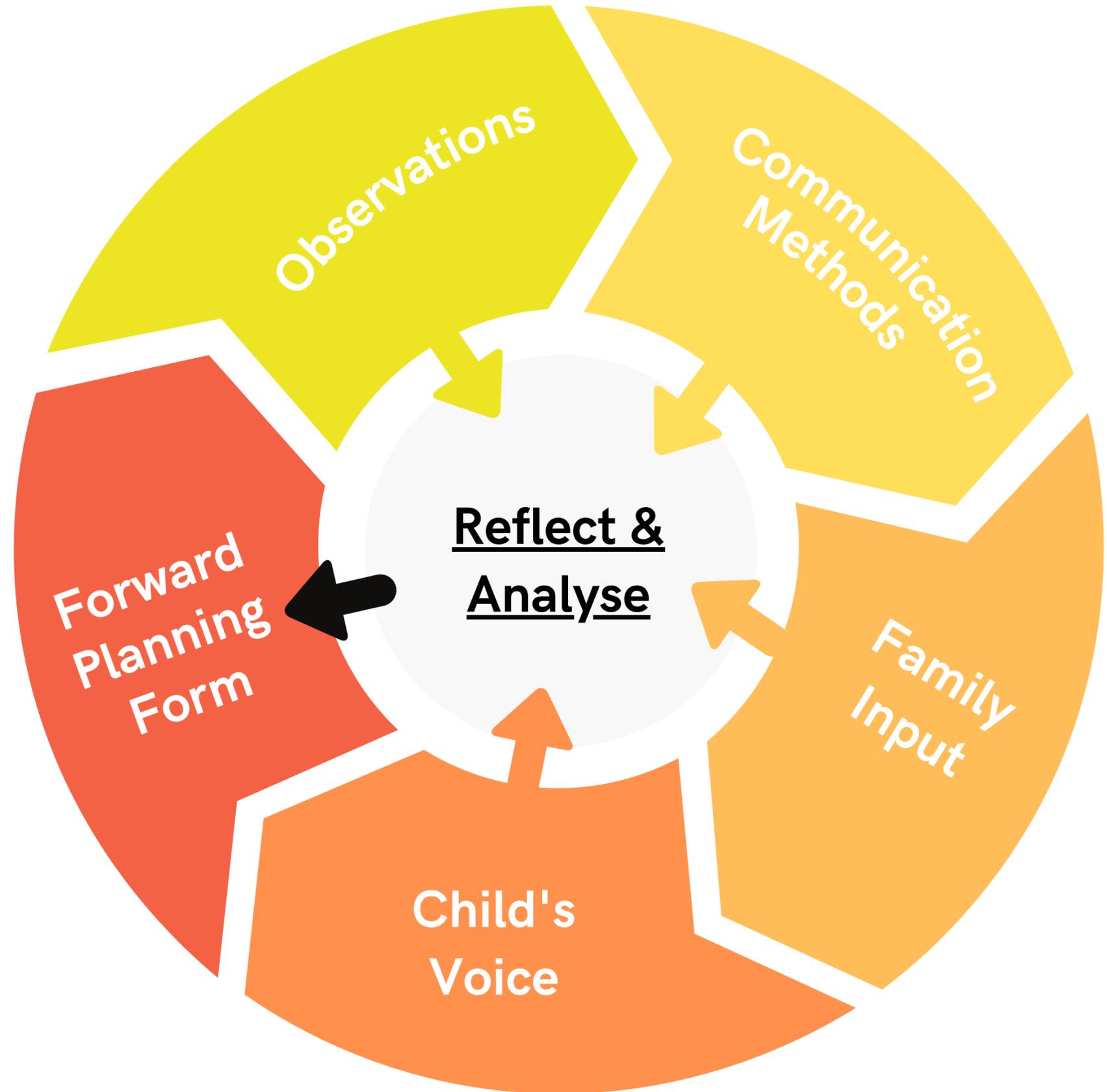
I'm going to take you on a quick walk now through the planning cycle framework that has worked for me for many (many) years and that I teach in all of my online workshops and mentor sessions.



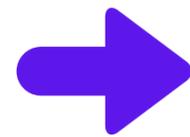




**STEP 3**



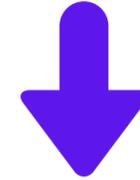
**STEP 4**



**USE YOUR  
ANALYSIS**

**Forward  
Planning**

**ADD TO  
PROGRAM**



**ADD TO  
FORWARD  
PLANNING  
RECORD**



**PLAN  
EXTENSION  
ACTIVITIES**



# LINKING

ORIGINAL  
OBSERVATION



Extension  
Activity.



FORWARD  
PLAN  
FORM

Program  
Focus Box



Evaluate &  
Date



**Isn't it exciting when  
you finally see how this all  
comes together?**

**An educator recently attended one of my other planning workshops and asked me afterwards if some of the real observation templates and forward planning examples I had used on the slides were still ‘relevant’ because they were **dated 2010 and 2014.****

Perhaps you would have asked the same question?

Understandable to reflect on but I think this educator was a bit surprised when I said the ones **I was using in 2005 would also be relevant** for use with the EYLF.

That’s the beauty of having a framework in place that can be tweaked when needed but doesn’t require you to start from scratch every time there is a change to a framework or shift in service delivery.



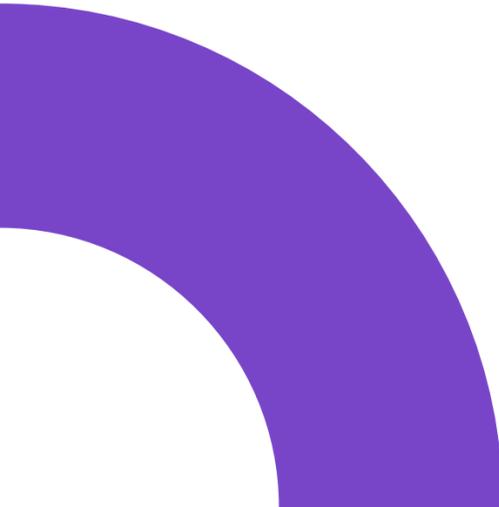
**THE  
EMPOWERED  
EDUCATOR**



**This wasn't a silly question by any means but that's my point...  
why are so many educators made to feel like whatever they are  
currently doing isn't quite good enough?**

**That they constantly need to change and update everything just  
to keep up and continue to meet current planning requirements?**

**I know what you're thinking. It's probably what you have been  
told you need to do.**



**BUT LET ME ASK  
YOU THIS...**

**Does it make you feel uncertain to see what others are doing and lead to you wasting time worrying about how you are supposed to make that work for you too?**

What if you instead focused your time on understanding their purpose, setting up, then following the same steps everytime that already incorporated the tools that work best for you?

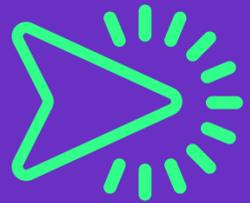
If, instead of stressing about what you \*might\* have to do, you just put your effort into building, tweaking and confidently following your own framework each day, week, month?



**YOUR PLANNING  
CYCLE DOESN'T NEED  
TO BE PERFECT - IT  
JUST NEEDS TO WORK  
FOR YOU... NOT  
AGAINST YOU.**



# THANKS FOR ATTENDING!



CLICK ON THE RED BUTTONS BELOW



PRESENTED BY  
JODIE CLARKE



THE  
EMPOWERED  
EDUCATOR

