

To create an environment that supports, reflects and promotes equitable and inclusive behaviours and practices, and respects individuals and groups of people, it is crucial that as a Centre we examine its value and belief systems.

This Centre is committed to ensuring that children are treated with respect and equality irrespective of gender. We aim to affirm the rights of all children in developing to their full potential irrespective of gender. Children will be encouraged to develop a sense of pride and self-worth, as they develop respect for each other's rights and responsibilities.

Gender plays a significant role in the lives of children. Educators working with children need to observe the implication of gender in children's choice of friends, activities, language, interactions, group dynamics and behaviour. These observations can lead to valuable insight into children's understandings about gender and what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.

Dau suggests the following principles as a basis to challenge sexism and promote anti-bias behavior:

- Be prepared to challenge sexist attitudes and behaviours
- Ensure that you protect the child or adult who has been treated unfairly
- Explain what you think is unfair about their attitudes and behaviours and if appropriate, model anti-sexist attitudes and behaviours
- Correct any incorrect and sexist assumptions a child has about gender
- Plan a strategy for how to deal with a similar situation in the future,'

Guidelines and Strategies

The following strategies assume shared understanding about issues of sexism. In order to assist this, in-centre activities of educator and parents should be encouraged.

Management/Nominated Supervisor/Certified Supervisor/Educators will:

- Be mindful and respectful of how activities and experiences provided may impact on the expectations, interests and behaviours of all genders.
- Provide a stimulating learning environment in which all children will be encouraged to explore a full range of experiences and emotions.
- Act as advocates of children in dealing with other adults who act in a bias manner against a child due to their gender
- Discourage the identification of particular skills, behaviours and feelings as 'boys' and 'girls'
- Encourage children to look upon both sexes as equal
- Support the gender equity policy review by focusing on how children constructed gender, the effects of gender in curriculum, teaching and learning
- Be responsive and ensure their actions are relevant to the specific and changing gender dynamics that emerge from the different ways in which different children interpret gender
- Monitor language, attitudes and assumptions with regard to gender and anti-bias of themselves, other educators and children
- Give positive messages about gender equity through their actions and words and avoid giving messages that promote traditional gender roles and gender bias.
- Critically reflect on their practices and environment and model a positive attitude towards gender equality.
- Encourage and support all children to participate in the full range of experiences and activities
- Encourage all children to express their emotions and to display affection and empathy.
- Regularly review resources, equipment, materials and images used with children to make sure they include gender diversity, non-stereotypical images and non-traditional family lifestyles such as single or same sex parents.



- Encourage children to explore their own gender identities and the impact of gender relations in their play.

Source: Equity Issues, Multicultural Resource Centre (FKA), Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, National Quality Standard, Early Years Learning Framework, The Anti-Bias approach in Early Childhood, Second Edition, Elizabeth Dau 2001, Early Childhood Australia, Relationships with children
http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/nqsplp/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/NQS_PLP_E-Newsletter_No36.pdf

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National Quality Standard – NQS		
Quality Area 5: Relationships with children		
5.1	Relationships between educators and children	Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child
5.1.1	Positive educator to child interactions	Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included.
5.1.2	Dignity and rights of the child	The dignity and rights of every child are maintained
5.2	Relationships between children	Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships
5.2.1	Collaborative learning	Children are supported to collaborate, learn from and help each other
Education and Care Service National Regulations		
73	Educational program	
155	Interactions with children	
156	Relationships in groups	
157	Access for parents	
Early Years Learning Framework		
Learning Outcome 1 - Children have a Strong Sense of Identity		
1.4	Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect	
Learning Outcome 2 - Children are Connected with and Contribute to their World		
2.1	Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation	
2.2	Children respond to diversity with respect	
2.3	Children become aware of fairness	
Learning Outcome 4 - Children are Confident and Involved Learners		
4.4	Children resource their own learning through connecting with people, place, technologies and natural and processed materials	

