

Culturally Inclusive Service Assessment Tool for Early Childhood Services

‘Respecting diversity means within the curriculum valuing and reflecting the practices, values and beliefs of families’

(EYLF: p. 13)

The purpose of this tool

The Culturally Inclusive Service Assessment Tool for Early Childhood Services will help your service answer the key question, **“How inclusive is your service of children and families from migrant and refugee backgrounds?”** The purpose of using this assessment tool is to encourage greater awareness of some of the needs and issues that migrant and refugees families may face in early childhood services. The tool can also help to identify gaps and barriers within a service that may need improvement and can also assist to develop strategies to better provide culturally inclusive and appropriate care for all children and families from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds.

How to use this tool

This tool provides a framework to assist you to gain an understanding of where your service is at, and what needs to be done in terms of providing culturally and linguistically inclusive and responsive curriculum. This tool provides concrete examples of the kinds of practices that foster such an environment and can be used at the beginning of the assessment process to help set your direction and planning, and also at the end to evaluate your progress. It is suggested that you use this tool at your service team meetings to inform your Service Support Plan (SSP) and service review and that staff at all levels are actively involved in the process. It is particularly important that decision makers within your organisation are on board as some strategies may require involvement at various levels within your organisation.

1. Educational Programming	Our service does this well	Our service has not yet addressed this well	Actions needed to improve on this	Resources needed to support this action	Target date
The Service has access to current data about cultural diversity in their local community					
Curriculum development reflects the cultural diversity represented in the service and of the wider community					
Educators utilise a range of strategies to support and promote children’s cultural learning					
Resources, materials, and activities reflect cultural diversity					
Educators access opportunities to promote the use of children’s home language in the service and at home					
The Service supports the ongoing consistent engagement of families in the program					
The service creates opportunities for family and extended family to participate in activities and share their culture					

Reflective Comments:

Tip Sheet 1

2. Communication	Our service does this well	Our service has not yet addressed this well	Actions needed to improve on this	Resources needed to support this action	Target date
We collect data on the cultural background, practices and languages spoken by families					
Bilingual families are provided with appropriate linguistic support during the enrolment process					
Bilingual children are able to communicate their needs in a variety of ways					
Access to an interpreter is available to families					
Access to translated information about the service and day-to-day operations is available to families					
Access to translated parenting related resources are available to families					
Educators use children's names and pronounce them correctly					
Written material produced in English uses plain language and simple terms, avoiding jargon					
Reflective Comments:					

3. Physical Environment and Practice	Our service does this well	Our service has not yet addressed this well	Actions needed to improve on this	Resources needed to support this action	Target date
The environment incorporates symbols and resources relevant to the cultural diversity in the community and in Australia. (e.g. maps, images on the walls, picture books, publications)					
Culturally inclusive practice is part of everyday routines					
Families can identify with their culture in the service environment					
Educators promote in children a strong sense of identity and sense of awareness of their own and other cultures					
Educators acknowledge and respect cultural practices specific to families					
Educators celebrate culturally diverse special events regularly					
Reflective Comments:					

Tip Sheet 1

4. Staff Development	Our service does this well	Our service has not yet addressed this well	Actions needed to improve on this	Resources needed to support this action	Target date
There is an ongoing commitment to professional development & training to promote culturally inclusive practices					
Educators are trained around cultural communication and support for migrant and refugee children and families					
Educators regularly reflect as a team on work styles and approaches to ensure culturally appropriate and inclusive program delivery					
Educators are confident in how to access and work with interpreters					
Educators develop skills for communication and support of bilingual children and families					
Educators are knowledgeable about local services in the area who can provide support for families					

Reflective Comments:

5. Policy and Service Management	Our service does this well	Our service has not yet addressed this well	Actions needed to improve on this	Resources needed to support this action	Target date
There is a written policy in place that addresses cultural diversity in practice					
Policy includes a mechanism to promote and monitor issues of access and equity for migrant and refugee families					
Policy is reviewed annually with input from all families					
The service prevents and challenges discrimination within the team and towards service users					
The service accesses the Bicultural Support Program, Inclusion Support Agency and relevant community support networks					
There are opportunities for families to be involved in management committees and/or can contribute to service management in a variety of ways					

Tip Sheet 1

5. Policy and Service Management (continued)	Our service does this well	Our service has not yet addressed this well	Actions needed to improve on this	Resources needed to support this action	Target date
The service has culturally accessible promotion available at relevant agencies in the area which have contact with families from culturally diverse background					
The budget includes the use of interpreters, translators and multicultural resources					
The service has allocated responsibility for cultural inclusive practice to appropriate educators					
The service has an external referral process in place					
Reflective Comments:					

Note: Refer to **Tip Sheet 7** for *Services, Resources and Referral Guide* information.

References

Belonging, Being, Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia 2009

Introductory Guide to the Service Support Plan 2009, KU Children's Services

Building Culturally & Linguistically Competent Services to Support Young Children, Their Families and School Readiness by Kathy Seitzinger Hepburn, M.S, Georgetown University Center for child and Human Development, May 2004

Inclusive Local Government A guide to good practice strategies for engaging young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds in local government services