

EARLY YEARS




# Foundations for Learning

Overview of the resource



Australian Government  
Department of Education,  
Skills and Employment

*This project is funded by the Australian Government  
through the [Non-Government Reform Support Fund](#)*



“.....many **parents engage in informal learning** with their children through activities **such as cooking, shopping, letter-writing and playing games**, but may not recognise them as ‘family-led learning’.

**Schools and educators can validate** and encourage these activities to increase parental confidence, improve parent-teacher relationships and potentially **increase the extent to which family-led learning occurs.**”

Barker, B., & Harris, D. (2020). [Parent and Family Engagement: An Implementation Guide for School Communities](#). Canberra: ARACY

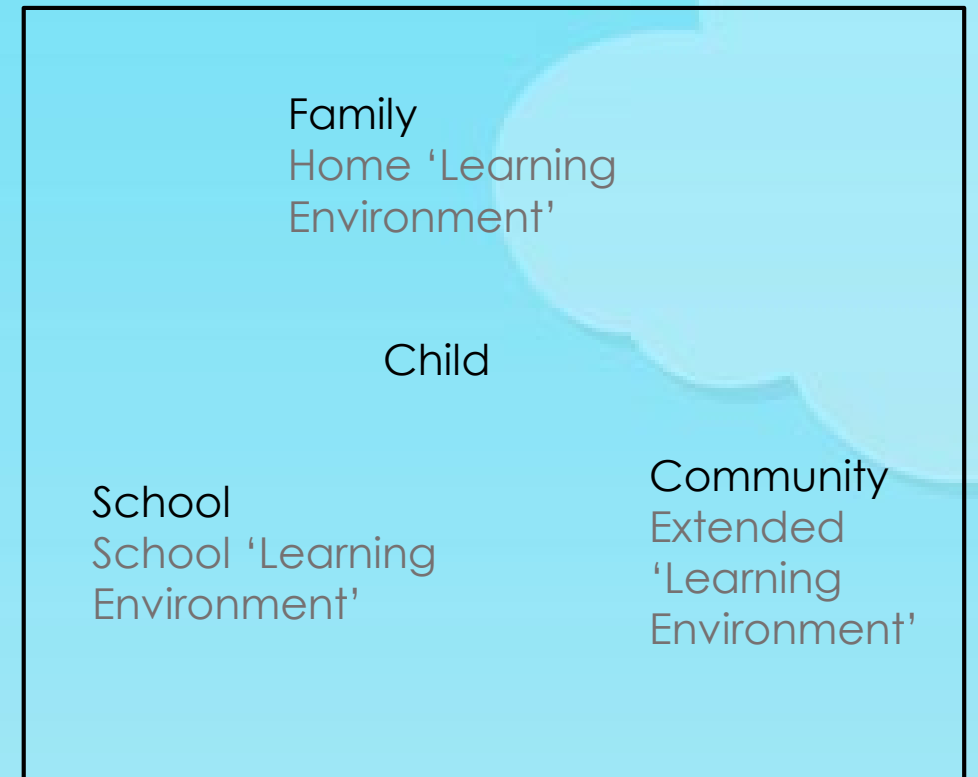
# ***Foundations for Learning* is designed to boost early literacy and numeracy development through family engagement**

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*Foundations for Learning* can help schools and prior-to-school settings:

1. Explore 'everyday' learning activities with **families** and make connections to formal 'in-school' learning
2. Support **educators** to reflect on their beliefs and professional practice
3. Support educators to nurture and leverage the knowledge and capacities within families to enhance the learning of children
4. Strengthen home/school\* **partnerships** so that all children thrive

\*The term home/school partnerships should be viewed as inclusive of partnerships in prior-to-school settings such as preschool and playgroup



# What does the research say?

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Young children are actively learning wherever they are – at home, in early learning programs, at school and in the community. This ‘early learning’ is fundamental to their development and significantly shapes their future learning, health and wellbeing outcomes.<sup>1</sup>

*“Investing time, effort and resources in children’s early years...brings lifelong benefits to them and to the whole community.”<sup>2</sup>*

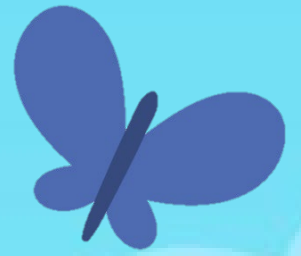
The research also tells us that:

- As 90% of a child’s brain development occurs before the age of five, the role of families is critical in early learning
- When families are engaged in their children’s learning at school, positive benefits accrue for children’s achievement and wellbeing
- Every family has an important role to play in helping their children to become confident and motivated learners. This is true regardless of parent occupation, education or income
- **Home/school partnerships are critical to student success**

1. Eadie, T. (2019). [Why Early Childhood Education is Everyone’s Business](#). Pursuit, University of Melbourne.

2. Heckman, J. (2017). [Invest in Early Childhood Development: Reduce Deficits, Strengthen the Economy](#). Heckman: The Economics of Human Potential.

The *Foundations for Learning* resource provides guidance on how to develop essential home/school partnerships, focusing on the ways in which schools and families together complement children's learning.

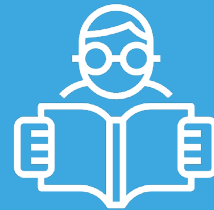


The *Foundations for Learning* resource:

Highlights that learning happens through everyday activities



Puts the learner at the centre



Focuses on the foundational aspects of literacy and numeracy



Supports teacher-led partnerships



Provides insight into the learning that occurs in prior-to-school and school settings



*Foundations for Learning* is mapped to the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and the NSW Syllabuses and addresses the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST) and the AITSL Principal Standards.

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### **Australian Professional Standards for Teachers**

**3.7.2** – Planning for appropriate and contextually relevant opportunities for parents/carers to be involved in their children’s learning.

**7.3.2** – Establish and maintain respectful collaborative relationships with parents/carers regarding their children’s learning and wellbeing.

### **Principal Standards**

Professional practice:

- Engaging & working with community



# How to use this resource:

At a staff meeting or in a professional learning community, **reflect** with colleagues on your beliefs and practices and **engage** in a professional conversation about children's early literacy and numeracy development – what does it look like in your classroom and how can it be supported at home? Explore the links to the EYLF and NSW Syllabus.

**Watch** a video to stimulate reflection and discussion



Engage families in a discussion about early literacy and numeracy development both at home and in your classroom. Provide opportunities for families to **share** their knowledge and expertise with you and other families. Encourage families to **explore** some of the strategies in the resource.

## TEACHERS



### REFLECT



30 min

#### Reflect on your knowledge and practice:

Consider the EYLF, NSW Syllabus and LPS:

- Where have these children come from?
- Where are you taking them?

Think about the learning happens in your classroom that builds the knowledge and skills for speaking and listening.

What do you expect from the early learner?

What do you want parents to know about speaking and listening?

How is speaking and listening used across the curriculum?

Consider this skill – What are the connections between literacy and numeracy?



### ENGAGE



45 min

#### Engage in a learning conversation with parents

Is there anything in the video that challenged your thinking about learning?

What foundational reading skills do you see in the video?

How are the children:

- Practising their skills?
- Testing their ideas?
- Building their knowledge?

Share what reading looks like in your classroom.

What opportunity can you create or do you have at home that develops reading?

## CURRICULUM

### Early Years Learning Framework Links (EYLF):

- Children are connected with and contribute to their world
- Children are confident and involved learners
- Children are effective communicators

### NSW Curriculum and Syllabus Links:

Demonstrates developing skills and strategies to read, view and comprehend short, predictable texts on familiar topics in different media and technologies (ENE-4A)

Demonstrates emerging skills and knowledge of texts to read and view, and shows developing awareness of purpose, audience and subject matter (EN-8B)

### Learning Progressions (LPs)

## Discover more about each topic

### Want to know more?

- 🔗 The Tricky Words Trick: Pause, Prompt, Praise
- 🔗 The Five 'Keys' to Reading
- 🔗 ABC Kids Listen – Storytime
- 🔗 How to build children's literacy skills
- 🔗 Creating a reading space for your child
- 🔗 Reading and why it's good for children

## FAMILIES



### READ



2 min

#### Literacy is best learned through typical situations that are engaging, meaningful and fun.

Reading is the foundation for successful learning and occurs when we connect written ideas with our understanding of the world.

There are 5 components of reading:

- Comprehension – making meaning from what you read
- Phonemic awareness – hearing the sounds that make up words
- Phonics – connecting the sounds and letters
- Fluency – the flow of language
- Vocabulary – a repertoire of words

Rhythm and rhyme shared through nursery rhymes and repetition create an awareness of the sounds that make the English language.



### EXPLORE



10 min

#### Some ideas for learning in the everyday.

- 🎵 Sing songs and nursery rhymes and sing out the words that rhyme
- 📖 Read stories that rhyme (e.g. Each Peach Pear Plum) often and allow your child to guess the rhyming words
- 🗉 Talk about the names and sounds of letters
- 🎮 Play word games like I spy.
- 👂 Read with your child and pay special attention to the sounds of words





## Possible uses for this resource

### With colleagues

- Whole Staff Meeting
- Stage/Grade Meeting
- Professional Learning Community
- TeachMeet
- Personal reflection

### With families

- 'everyday'
- Parent information sessions
- Kindergarten orientation & transition
- School or centre open days
- Parent/child/teacher interviews
- Links on school/centre website
- Parent information packs
- School/centre newsletters





# Frameworks for home/school partnerships: Some suggested reading

[Global Family Partnerships](#)

Global Family  
Research Project

[Parenting Research Centre](#)

 Parenting Research Centre

[Family School Partnerships Framework](#)

FAMILY - SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS  
**FRAMEWORK**  
A guide for schools and families

[Evidence for Learning - Parent Engagement](#)

 EVIDENCE  
FOR LEARNING

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# Foundations for Learning

[www.csnsw.catholic.edu.au/foundationsforlearning](http://www.csnsw.catholic.edu.au/foundationsforlearning)