

Gathering **O**f **A**ccomplished **L**earning

GOAL

The Algoma District Services Administration Board is excited to share the amended Quality Assurance Tool. The intent is to inspire self-reflection and a strength-based approach to begin conversations about quality in our child care sector. The tool provides opportunities to engage in discussions and set goals with intention, purpose and understanding of Ontario's pedagogical documents.

Our expectation is that educators will explore, reflect on, and apply research and best practices, ultimately leading to enhanced learning environments and experiences.

Overview

1. self-reflect on the six pedagogical approaches, individually and as a team
2. commit to one goal, determining who the participants will be
3. gather evidence to capture highlights of accomplished learning throughout the year
4. submit evidence to ADSAB in celebration of your quality journey

This cycle will take approximately a full year and upon completion will connect back to the beginning

The process will emphasize strategies, skills, and concepts that promote ongoing communication, inquiry, and critical thinking. It highlights the importance of incorporating diverse perspectives and shared understandings while considering the interconnected roles of educators, children, and families. This collaborative approach forms the foundation for quality child care.

Children Services is committed to supporting educators through a continuous journey of reflection, collaboration, and growth. By fostering a culture of reflective practice, the context plays a central role in driving quality initiatives and supports the ongoing improvement of early learning experiences across Algoma.

Site visits will be designed to be supportive, and low barrier for programs. The focus will be on listening, observing and highlighting the unique aspects of each site - from materials and environments to relationships and daily practices. Notes or anecdotes may sometimes be shared back with the site, though documentation is generally minimal. No formal procedure will accompany site visits at this time. We will reflect on what educators are already doing, introduce provocations, stories, and contexts to inspire next steps. The heart of the visit will be in the dialogue and in celebrating what is already happening, while opening space for new thinking. We will grow with educators, becoming trusted partners in practices that support reflection, dialogue, and a sense of connection across the district.

By focusing on what people can do rather than what they aren't doing can help individuals see that they have something valuable to offer. We will suggest approaches to worthiness, create a sense of belonging, and provide paths to improved skills in different areas. Working from strengths will create a culture where everyone is seen as having something significant to contribute.

Rationale for Goal Setting

Goal Setting brings fresh opportunities for growth. It boosts staff engagement, motivation and performance while providing clarity, purpose and a road map for professional growth which leads to better child outcomes. Goal setting is a powerful way to align your team, enhance your program, and create an enriching environment. Whether you're looking to refine classroom practices, improve communication with families, or boost staff engagement, setting clear and achievable goals can make all the difference. It will transform daily tasks into a shared vision, enhance skill development and foster a positive culture where educators feel valued and can see their contributions to children's holistic learning.

Visualizing a goal helps set them in your mind and fosters a sense of accountability, making it easier to stay focused and committed throughout the year.

Strengthening partnership not only fosters a supportive community, it also reassures everyone by keeping them informed and engaged. This consistency builds partnerships, equity, diversity and inclusion.

Goal setting is important, but follow-through is essential. Organize check-ins to:

- Assess progress: Review goals to see what's on track and identify any adjustments.
- Celebrate wins: Recognize achievements, both big and small, to boost morale and motivation.
- Adjust plans as needed: Make necessary modifications to ensure goals remain achievable and aligned with evolving priorities.

Encourage open and honest discussions during these check-ins, creating a safe space where staff feel heard and valued. Use check-ins to offer additional resources or tools to help them stay on course. Regular check-ins keep goals relevant, build accountability, and maintain momentum, ensuring sustained progress throughout the year.

Recognize the goals achieved by your staff. Highlight accomplishments, reflect on the year's growth and set the tone for an even more successful goal. Celebrating progress fosters motivation and boosts morale among staff.

Remember: every goal, no matter how small, is a step toward growth and success. Here's to a full year of gathering of accomplished learning

A strength-based approach transforms the work environment by shifting the focus from fixing problems to leveraging existing capabilities. This mindset fosters a culture of success where educators feel valued and empowered.

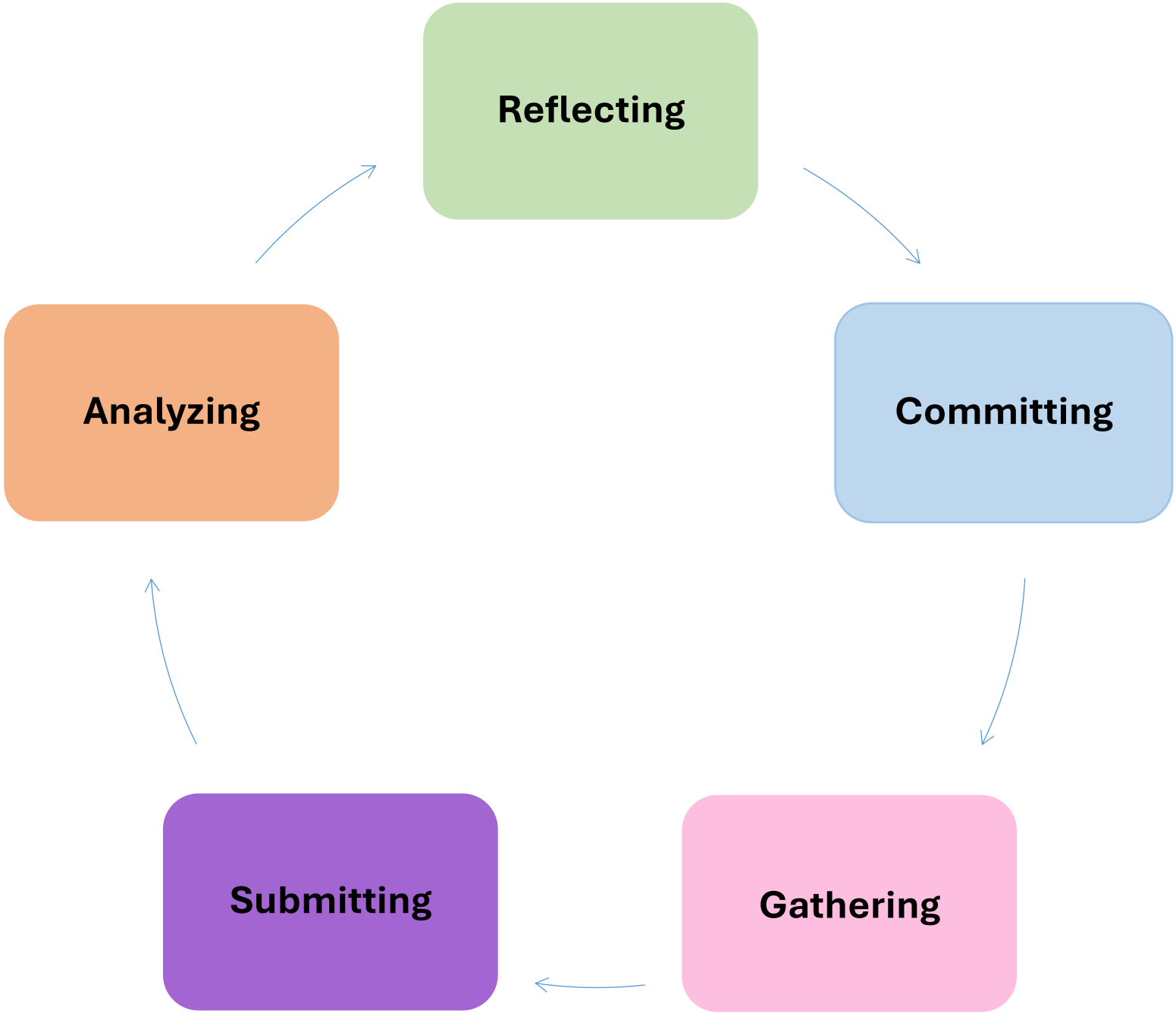
Key benefits for staff

- Increased Engagement and Motivation: staff are happier and more naturally productive when their roles are adapted to play to their strengths. Research indicates focusing on educators' strengths significantly increases engagement at work.
- Enhanced Professional Confidence: training focused on strengths helps boost professional confidence and skill sets.
- Reduced Burnout and Stress: building safe spaces, helps mitigate the emotional impact of challenging behaviors and reduces educator burnout.
- Better Workplace Relationships: a strength-based perspective encourages caring relationships among colleagues and a "parallel process" where staff who feel supported are better equipped to support families.
- Improved Problem-Solving: staff learn to view challenges as learning opportunities, developing better coping mechanisms and the ability to set goals that respond to adverse situations.
- Collaborative Team Culture: it fosters a supportive environment where educators feel safe to innovate and take risks. Shared learning environments allow educators to highlight where their peers thrive, strengthening team camaraderie.

Impact on Teaching and Planning

- Tailored Instruction: Educators can more easily customize lesson plans and curricula when they focus on what children can do, making their teaching more effective and personally meaningful.
- Positive Parent Partnerships: Sharing a child's strengths with families fosters hope and builds a more positive, cooperative relationship between staff and caregivers.
- Empowerment as Partners: Families feel more motivated and less overwhelmed when educators share a child's successes and potential rather than just their "shortcomings".
- Consistent Support at Home: A strength-based parent education model helps caregivers recognize and nurture their child's unique traits, strengthening the parent-child bond.

Gathering of Accomplished Learning (GOAL)



1.1 Self-Reflection Tool

Here is a self-reflection tool which focuses on what works well and how to use this for further development. It is a shift from a professional focus of problem-solving shortfalls to leveraging existing talents, highlighting strengths, encouraging further improvements and showing that there is still growth potential. Focusing on positive attributes and successes generally increases energy, self-esteem and confidence amongst you and your team. Using your strengths daily is likely to increase engagement in your work, leading to higher levels of motivation and productivity. When you are aware of your own strengths and those of your colleagues it fosters a more inclusive and respectful workplace culture.

We ask you to reflect on the pedagogical approaches listed below. Pause and slow down to develop a critical understanding of your own practice. Change your thinking from “what you do” to “why you do it”, creating more intentional, responsive, and inclusive learning environments. Develop a growth mindset where you view strengths as opportunities to learn.

In all six pedagogical approaches choose the statement that best associates with your current practice: often, sometimes, or rarely.

Upon completing your review of the pedagogical approaches, please identify which approach you most frequently selected "often." Focusing on a strength-based approach will allow you to recognize and appreciate your own abilities and talents, fostering a sense of confidence in your contributions. This process is designed to shift the focus from deficits to your strengths and interests. Recognizing that everyone has potential, this approach concentrates on "what's strong" rather than "what's wrong”.

Be ready to share your discoveries with the team.

Pedagogical Approach One

Responsive Relationships are part of the foundation for a high-quality early learning environment, fostering healthy development, positive learning experiences and a strong footing for lifelong success.

In the context of "How Does Learning Happen?" (HDLH), responsive relationships in early childhood are characterized by warm, caring, and attentive interactions between caregivers and children, where needs are met and communication is reciprocal. These relationships are crucial for building a child's sense of security, emotional wellbeing, and social competence, and will lay the foundation for future learning and development.

Responsive Relationships	Ways to promote responsive relationships	Self-reflection
1. I start the day with a friendly hello and a smile that makes everyone feel welcome.	• greet families and children by name • greet every child at eye level; make eye contact • use a friendly nonverbal greeting, such as a handshake, high five, or thumbs-up • give a few words of encouragement • ask how their day is going	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely
2. I respond to needs, whether it's a comforting hug or help with a task to help build trust and security.	• actively notice, interpret, and respond to a child's cues, signals, and needs, whether verbal or non-verbal • respond quickly, consistently, and warmly to children, especially when they are upset, hurt, or uncomfortable • offer simple, appropriate choices to avoid power struggles • acknowledge feelings, stay calm, and help them navigate frustrations • use simple language, and listen to their perspectives to make them feel heard	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely
3. I listen actively, offer support, share knowledge and provide constructive, appreciative feedback with colleagues.	• active listening means focusing entirely on the speaker to understand their perspective, emotions, and intentions, rather than just hearing the words • eliminate distractions by putting away phones, closing laptops and stopping multitasking • reflect on what you have heard to ensure understanding and ask open-ended questions to encourage deeper conversations • offer guidance, training, or tools to help develop a plan for improvement • acknowledge strengths alongside areas for growth to maintain morale	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely
4. I talk with children at their level, use simple language and respond to their attempts to communicate to help them develop language skills and confidence.	• if a child says "doggy", respond with "Yes, that's a big brown dog" to model proper language and add new vocabulary • when a child attempts to communicate, stop, lower yourself, listen, and respond; use gestures like nodding and smiling to show engagement • read books with colorful pictures and ask questions to encourage interaction • engage in pretend play to help children explore new words and ideas • offer praise like "That's a great idea!", or "You did it!" to build self-esteem	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely

5. As I discuss feelings with children, I am affirming and acknowledging their experiences.	• focus only on the child without distractions by using your body language and voice • lean toward them and nod your head as they talk • tell the child that you understand what they're feeling and help the child learn to identify and work through feelings and problems on their own • remember that the child's problems are as real to them as yours are to you • remember that every feeling is acceptable, but not every behavior is	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely
6. I teach children coping strategies to help them develop emotional regulation skills.	• create a quiet, safe, and cozy space for children to visit when they feel overwhelmed, equipped with calming items • predictable schedules reduce anxiety and create a sense of security, making it easier for children to manage transitions and emotions • teach deep breathing like "balloon breathing" (e.g., inhaling deeply, exhaling slowly) to calm their nervous system and remain calm and in control during a child's tantrum, acting as a sturdy leader to help the child self-regulate • utilize puppets, feeling wheels, or storybooks to help children identify and talk about their emotions and acknowledge emotions plainly like "I see you're sad" rather than dismissing them, helping children to connect feelings to words • allow children to use physical movement, safe actions to release energy, such as stretching, jumping in place, or taking a walk to release tension	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely
7. I work with children on projects, playing games, and resolving conflicts to help them learn to interact positively with others.	• daily teaching of emotional words helps children identify and express their feelings before they escalate into physical action • praise children for using words, showing empathy, and collaborating • encourage apologies that show remorse and restore the relationship • listen to the child's perspective without interrupting; ask simple, open questions like "What happened?" and "How did that make you feel?" • instead of imposing a fix, ask "What can we do to solve this problem?" for younger children, offer choices like "Should we use a timer or find another toy?"; once a solution is chosen, restate the plan clearly; observe the children to ensure they stick to the agreement and provide reminders if they struggle	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely
8. I recognize and praise children's efforts and accomplishments to motivate them to continue learning and trying new things.	• encourage self-reflection by asking, "How did you figure that out?" or "Are you proud of your work?" • acknowledge the courage it takes to start a new activity, focusing on the attempt rather than the final result • let children know that mistakes are part of learning and that you also learn from trying new, hard things • emphasize that continuing to work on something is valuable, even if they haven't mastered it yet • focus on individual improvement rather than comparing a child's work to others	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely

9. I help when a child is struggling with a task or concept to help them persevere and build confidence.	• divide complex tasks into smaller, achievable steps to avoid overwhelming the child • teach children phrases like “I can do this!” or “I’m not giving up yet!” to boost their confidence • reassure children that it is okay to struggle and that they can ask for help or take a break • recognize and celebrate when they reach a small goal or keep trying despite difficulties • always encourage them to come back to the task once they are calm, so they don’t associate “giving up” with “relief”	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely
10. I acknowledge both positive outcomes and challenges to develop resilience and a growth mindset.	• when a child says, “I can’t do this!”, add “…yet!” to encourage persistence and show that abilities develop over time • during reflection time, discuss both what went well (positive outcome) and what was tricky (challenge) to normalize setbacks • help children see that their hard work directly led to their success • identify the techniques used, such as “I like how you tried a different way to stack those blocks when they fell!” • provide tasks that are just above their current ability level to experience the satisfaction of overcoming a hurdle	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely

Pedagogical Approach Two

Exploration, Play, and Inquiry-based Learning are interconnected, child-centered approaches where children learn by actively investigating the world through curiosity, hands-on experiences and questions.

In "How Does Learning Happen?", learning through exploration, play, and inquiry is highlighted as a crucial approach for early childhood education. This approach emphasizes active learning, where children engage with their environment and build knowledge through hands-on experiences, curiosity, and questioning. It moves away from passive learning and focuses on fostering skills like problem-solving, critical thinking, and collaboration.

Learning through Exploration, Play, and Inquiry	Ways to promote exploration, play and inquiry-based learning	Self-reflection
1. I encourage children to be actively involved in their learning process rather than inactively receiving information.	• use hands-on, project-based learning science experiments, building models, and sensory activities to encourage exploration; encourage "investigating" where children dive into, explore, and discuss their findings • integrate movement into learning, such as dramatic play, role-playing, and interactive, structured play times • use prompts like "What do you think will happen if…?" or "Why do you think the plant needs sunlight?" to spark critical thinking instead of providing direct answers or instructions, act as facilitators who guide discovery • if a child becomes fascinated by a bird outside, pivot the "lesson" to explore bird habitats, diets, and songs through hands-on activities rather than sticking to a pre-set topic • pair older or more experienced children with younger ones to allow them to reinforce their own understanding by explaining concepts to a peer	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely
2. I see play as a way for children to explore, experiment and make sense of their world.	• shift from direct instruction to acting as facilitators who provide open-ended materials, observe curiosity, and scaffold learning • when children ask, "What if?", supporting their investigation into cause-and-effect; a block tower collapsing is not a failure…it is an experiment in physics • instead of interrupting, observe play to understand a child's current interest; offer new materials (e.g., adding measuring cups to a sand table) to extend their exploration • outdoor play allows children to observe plans, animals, and weather patterns, fostering a deep connection to nature • through pretend play, children construct and refine their understanding of societal roles and community expectations	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely

3. I allow children to engage in activities, experiment and construct their own understanding.	• set up safe, accessible, and organized spaces with a variety of materials like art supplies, sensory bins (e.g., sand, water, mud), and building materials (e.g., boxes, blocks, natural materials) • allow children to select their own activities, fostering independence and allowing them to follow their interests • offer just enough support or guidance to help a child move to a new level of understanding without taking over the task • ask questions that deepen curiosity rather than providing direct answers • regularly introduce new materials to spark renewed interest and exploration	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely
4. I foster learning by observing, questioning, and extending children's play and inquiries.	• actively watch children to understand their interests and how they connect with their environment • build on their current knowledge, helping them bridge the gap between curiosity and understanding through provocations • structure learning around children's own questions and discoveries rather than a rigid curriculum • participate in their play but allow them to guide the direction of the activity • think aloud about your own process "I'm wondering which block will be the sturdiest for the base" to normalize internal questioning for the children	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely
5. I extend children's learning by introducing new challenges and supporting them in building upon their knowledge.	• observe, then add complexity to existing play; for example, add writing materials to block play or introduce new, varied props to role-play to extend storylines • offer just-out-of-reach challenges to foster confidence, encouraging children to try new things and persevere • provide a hint, a cue, or model a skill rather than doing the task for them • increase the challenge as they gain mastery, or reduce it if they become too frustrated to persist • ensure daily schedules allow for long periods of sustained investigation so children can deeply engage with a challenge	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely
6. A culture of inquiry is characterized by curiosity, exploration and a willingness to learn from mistakes.	• mistakes are treated as essential, positive parts of the learning process, which helps children develop perseverance • children are encouraged to analyze situations, form hypotheses, and test their ideas, learning from the results (even if they fail) • educators and children together reflect on their experiences to construct new knowledge • inquiry requires unhurried time; a culture of exploration doesn't rush children through transitions, allowing them to reach a state of "flow" in their work • because there is no fear of being "wrong", children feel safe to take intellectual and creative risks; this builds resilience and self-regulation	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely

7. I provide an environment for children to feel safe, take risks, ask questions, and pursue their interests.	• focus on enabling play rather than eliminating all risk; distinguish between hazards (unacceptable risk) and risks (opportunities for growth) • provide materials that children can manipulate to build their own challenges • encourage children to choose how they play and challenge themselves without pressure to go beyond their comfort zone **Common Examples of Risky Play to Encourage** o Height: climbing trees, jumping from logs, or climbing on high structures o Speed: running, biking, or using skates/scooters o Tools: using scissors, hammers, or saws o Elements: playing with fire, water, or in mud o Rough and Tumble: play fighting, chasing, or wrestling o Disappearing/Seeking: hiding or being out of immediate adult sight • introduce supervised use of hammers, saws, or vegetable peelers to develop hand-eye coordination and trust **Benefits-risk Analysis** o Ask: “What is the benefit of this activity (e.g., building resilience or balance)?” o Ask: “Is the potential injury minor (like a scrape) or life-altering?” • discuss boundaries with parents and colleagues so everyone is comfortable with “as safe as necessary” rather than “as safe as possible”	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely
8. I support risky play.	• allow children to climb trees, balance on logs, jump off stumps, use climbing nets, ride bicycles or scooters, run down hills, and use sleds • risks allow children to challenge themselves, while hazards (like a broken swing) should be removed • count to 30 before intervening to allow children to assess situations themselves • instead of saying "be careful," ask "Do you feel stable?" or "What is your plan to get down?" • encourage children to navigate challenges and take ownership of their safety shifting from a mindset of "as safe as possible" to "as safe as necessary"	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely

9. I model an inquiry stance, demonstrating my own curiosity and willingness to learn alongside them.	• take time to listen to children's theories and ideas, validating their thinking and helping them explore it further
	• when a child asks a question you can't answer, respond with, "That's a great question! How can we find that out?" This shifts the focus from the answer to the research process
	• encourage trial and error, ensuring children know that mistakes are part of the learning process
	  ○ Observe children to discover their interests and questions
	  ○ Plan experiences that allow them to explore those interests in depth
	  ○ Provide materials that are open-ended and encourage investigation
	  ○ Engage in dialogue that encourages critical thinking and deeper understanding
	  ○ Document and evaluate the learning process with children, families, and colleagues
	• before trying something, say, "I predict that this heavy rock will sink, but what about this light leaf
	• rather than just supervising, play with children to foster connection and trust, encouraging them to see educators as partners in learning
		☐ Often
		☐ Sometimes
		☐ Rarely

10. Programming happens in both indoor and outdoor environments.	• outdoor spaces allow for unique, sensory-rich activities not possible indoors, such as messy play (mud, water), gardening, large-scale construction, and nature science; outdoor play is linked to better health, improved motor skills, and reduced stress • both spaces provide opportunities to foster friendships and promote emotional regulation; outdoor play specifically increases physical activity levels compared to being indoors • bring "indoor" activities outside such as outdoor story time or sidewalk chalk art and bring "outdoor" elements inside by using nature tables filled with pinecones, leaves, and shells • prepare children with appropriate clothing for all seasons, viewing rain and snow as unique learning opportunities rather than barriers • children gain a well-rounded skill set, from the fine motor precision of indoor crafts to the physical resilience and risk assessment learned while climbing outdoors	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely

Pedagogical Approach Three

Educators as Co-learners, is crucial to cultivate a collaborative and reflective environment where everyone feels empowered to learn from each other. This involves creating opportunities for shared learning experiences, providing constructive feedback, and valuing diverse perspectives.

In the framework of "How Does Learning Happen?", educators function as co-learners, transitioning from solely being knowledge experts to engaging in collaborative inquiry, exploration, and research alongside children. This approach encourages the development of partnerships where educators and children jointly construct knowledge, reflect on experiences together to enhance understanding, support inquiry-based learning, and nurture reciprocal relationships.

Educators as Co-learners	Ways to promote educators as co-learners	Self-reflection
1. I regularly reflect on my own learning and teaching practices to identify areas for growth and improvement.	• reflect on how well you supported children's emotional well-being and responded to their needs throughout the day • actively observe children's responses to my care and adapt future practices • reflect on my "serve and return" interactions how responsive and emotionally available am I to each child • how did my own emotions affect my interactions today • what is one thing I will do differently tomorrow based on today's experience	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely
2. I work with children to co-construct knowledge and solve problems.	• rather than simply transmitting knowledge, I work alongside children, fostering a sense of shared responsibility for learning • I encourage children to identify problems and brainstorm potential solutions to promote critical thinking skills • set up intentional environments where materials act as a "third teacher" to spark curiosity and problem-solving • recognize that children express their knowledge in many ways through art, drama, or construction and use pedagogical documentation to make this thinking visible • by involving children in planning and evaluating their own learning, I foster a sense of ownership and autonomy, making learning more relevant and powerful	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely
3. I work with children to investigate a topic, guiding the process while also learning alongside the child.	• observe and identify what sparks curiosity, whether it's a bug, a shadow, or a question, and use this to initiate investigations • take photos, write down questions, and collect drawings to make thinking visible and track progress • brainstorm with children to map out what we already know and what you want to find out • admit "I don't know", model that you don't have all the answers • I'm careful not to take over the project with my own goals. I ensure the investigation continues to follow the child's lead while you offer support to push their thinking further	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely

4. I understand each child's unique learning journey.	• capture and interpret a child's progress, skills, and interests over time by creating… a) **Learning Stories**: use a narrative format to describe a child's engagement in an activity, interpreting what they learned and planning how to extend that interest b) **Portfolios**: collect tangible evidence drawings, paintings, or photos of block structures to showcase evolution in fine motor skills and creative thinking c) **Digital Media**: capture photos and videos to freeze moments of discovery, making it easier to share the child's learning process with parents • observe whether a child is a visual (prefers charts/pictures), auditory (enjoys stories/songs), or kinesthetic (needs hands-on, active learning) learner a) **Visual**: provide picture books, charts, and colorful media for children who prefer looking and watching b) **Auditory**: use songs, rhymes, and storytelling for those who learn best through sound and discussion c) **Kinesthetic/Tactile**: offer hands-on materials like playdough, sand, and building blocks for children who need to move and touch to understand • notice how a child approaches learning, such as their persistence, curiosity, or desire to cooperate, which builds their identity as a learner • follow the child's lead by observing what fascinates them and supporting their self-directed play and exploration, which encourages deeper engagement • regularly discuss observations with parents to gain a holistic view of the child's development, including social skills and relationship a) **Questionnaires**: use brief surveys to ask parents about their child's interests at home, such as a new fascination with animals or specific family traditions b) **Progress Sharing**: host regular meetings to discuss observations and set collaborative goals, ensuring a consistent approach between home and school c) **Two-Way Dialogue**: invite parents to add their own observations to a child's "Learning Journey" record to create a more holistic picture of their development	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely
5. I actively participate in the children's learning experiences.	• observe what fascinates the child and join their activity rather than redirecting it; If they are building a "car wash" with blocks, ask how the cars get dry instead of telling them to build a house • actively participate in activities, rather than just supervising • engage in, and promote, active play to develop gross motor skills and physical literacy • participate in group activities to help children learn to navigate social dynamics, express emotions, and build resilience • take on a role in their make-believe world, such as being a customer at their "restaurant" or a patient at their "doctor's office"	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely

6. I foster a sense of partnership and collaboration between myself and the children	• partner with other agencies to provide comprehensive support, especially for children with additional needs • consistent, secure, and responsive relationships to create a strong foundation for learning • align goals and strategies between home and child care settings to ensure a seamless experience for the child • regularly update parents on milestones, learning, and daily experiences • incorporate family traditions, languages, and values into the curriculum. For example, invite parents to share stories or music in their home language	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely
7. I research information and share findings.	• children are more deeply engaged in activities that align with their personal interests compared to adult-directed tasks • involve children as co-researchers by letting them help define topics and collect data, ensuring their voices are directly represented in the findings • present information through child-friendly, reports, posters or digital, tools, tailored to their age group • explain what the findings mean for them directly and encourage them to share their opinions, on the information • use positive, "strengths-based" language rather than critical or judgmental tones	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely
8. I offer support and encouragement without simply providing the solution.	• get down to the child's eye level, make eye contact, and listen attentively to show their thoughts are valued; empathize with their emotions to help them feel understood • offer positive attention for desired behaviors rather than focusing only on negative behavior • empower children by offering simple, age-appropriate choices, such as picking between two different books or snack colors • demonstrate how to handle frustration or how to apologize sincerely, as children learn primarily by observing your actions • guide children through identifying problems and brainstorming their own solutions together	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely
9. I listen to and build upon student ideas, fostering a sense of ownership and further exploration.	• view children as capable individuals with strong potential • dedicate time to watching play without interjecting; notice non-verbal cues, facial expressions, and how they interact with materials • offer choices in activities, such as deciding which learning center to use or which book to read; allow them to choose roles in group projects or daily chores, which builds accountability and competence • give children "jobs" such as plant care, setting the table for snacks, or tidying up, which nurtures a sense of responsibility for their shared space • allow children to help set the pace of the day, such as deciding when to transition from play to mealtime based on their cues rather than just the clock	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely

10. I embrace the role of co-learners with colleagues, shifting from working in isolation to participating in a shared professional journey.	• moving away from working in silos to embracing shared accountability for outcomes, such as child development or organizational goals • diverse perspectives and shared knowledge lead to more innovative solutions and better decisions • join or establish a Community of Practice to regularly exchange knowledge and experiences colleagues facing similar professional challenges • shift from critiquing past actions (feedback) to a forward-thinking mindset that focuses on what can be done differently in the future • build trust by openly acknowledging struggles and viewing mistakes as collective learning opportunities, which encourages risk-taking and innovation	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely

Pedagogical Approach Four

By thoughtfully designing and utilizing the **Environment as a Third Teacher**, educators can create a powerful learning tool that supports children's development, curiosity, and engagement. Create spaces that are not just functional, but also stimulating, engaging and supportive of children's holistic development.

The environment in the context of "How Does Learning Happen?", is not merely a backdrop, but an active "third teacher" (alongside educators and peers" that influences learning, fosters inquiry, and promotes well-being. A thoughtfully designed environment in HDLH is, above all, responsive to the children's interests, and encourages them to make their thinking visible.

Environments as a Third Teacher	Ways to promote the environment as a third teacher	Self-reflection
1. I intentionally design the environment to foster learning, exploration and independence.	• label clear toy containers with word and photo-based labels and use low, open shelves to encourage self-selection, self-sufficiency and independent cleanup • avoid cluttering by limiting the number of available materials to prevent "choice overload" and encourage deeper focus on specific tasks • incorporate diverse textures, natural light, neutral tones and even scents (like herbs) to stimulate different learning styles and keep the brain engaged • offer choices like floor cushions, standing desks, or bean bags so learners can select the position that best supports their focus • alternate between "active" zones for collaboration and "quiet" nooks for reflection to prevent overstimulation and allow for self-regulation	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely
2. I include open spaces for movement, cozy corners for reading, and designated areas for building or art.	• keep large sections of the floor clear of fixed furniture to allow for crawling, rolling, and sitting in different postures, which improves circulation and core strength • ensure outdoor environments have large, open, flat, and grassy areas and incorporate logs or beams to encourage balance and spatial awareness and non-competitive games • connect with nature by planting, exploring, or using sensory materials like water tables, sandboxes, and mud, which encourage movement • provide accessible, varied equipment that can be used for diverse skill levels, such as riding toys, balls, and, in some cases, musical instruments • view the environment itself as an educator that prompts children to move without constant adult instruction	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely
3. I ensure materials are easy for children to access and see, promoting independence and self-directed learning.	• place materials on shelves at the child's eye level to foster independence • use open storage bins (without lids) for materials you want children to access independently • label bins with both words and pictures to support independence and clean-up routines • display books on racks where children can see the covers • rotate bins to keep materials fresh and avoid overwhelming children	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely

4. I incorporate natural light, plants and natural materials to create a calming and stimulating atmosphere.	• maximize daylight by keeping windows clear, using sheer curtains, and positioning play areas near light sources; this helps regulate children's daily patterns, improves mood, and reduce energy consumption • bring nature indoors with safe, low-maintenance, air-purifying non-toxic plants (e.g., Boston Ferns, Areca Palms); use them to add tranquility and visual interest, placing them on shelves or in corners • replace plastic toys with wood, stones, pinecones, wool, and seashells to encourage open-ended, sensory-driven play; these materials encourage fine motor skills and creative hands-on learning • use neutral, soft paint colors and natural, organic furnishings to reduce visual overload and foster a home-like atmosphere • opting for wooden furniture and woven rugs over synthetic alternatives teaches children early environmental stewardship	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely

5. The environment enhances children's physical development, coordination and overall well-being.	• utilize uneven surfaces, climbing structures, trees, and tunnels to build balance, core strength, and coordination
	• provide large, open areas for running, skipping, and chasing games
	• integrate movement into daily routines, such as active songs during transitions
	• do not make all equipment available daily; switch up specialized items (e.g., balance beams, tunnels, or tricycles) to keep the environment novel and encourage motor creativity
	  ○ **Infants**: use soft, cushioned areas with playmats for tummy time and place toys slightly out of reach to encourage reaching, crawling and rolling
	  ○ **Toddlers**: provide push-and-pull toys, low tunnels, climbing blocks for balancing and simple obstacle courses to build leg strength and coordination
	  ○ **Preschoolers**: use hula hoops, beanbags for throwing/catching, and climbing frames to improve agility and hand-eye coordination
		☐ Often
		☐ Sometimes
		☐ Rarely

6. Barriers that are in the way of children's exploration are eliminated.	• get down on hands and knees to identify potential hazards or barriers to access, such as toys stored too high • ensure materials, books, and toys are accessible, tidy, and appropriately matched to the children's developmental ages and abilities • provide appropriate outdoor gear (e.g., muddy buddies, proper clothing) to ensure comfort in cold or wet weather, removing discomfort as a barrier to playing • arrange outdoor spaces to promote movement and exploration rather than just empty, uninviting open space • shift my mindset from focusing on safety restrictions to fostering curiosity, encouraging, and asking open-ended questions about their exploration	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely

7. I set up engaging materials and activities (provocations) to spark curiosity and encourage exploration.	**Engaging Materials to Encourage Exploration** a) sand, water, mud, and playdough b) pinecones, rocks, seashells, and wooden blocks to foster imaginative building and exploration c) magnifying glasses for investigating insects and plants d) various types of crayons, paints, and sponges for painting on different surfaces e) dress-up clothes, masks, hats, and play food for role-playing f) homemade shakers (filled with rice or beans) for exploring sound **Activities to Spark Curiosity** a) collect items and discuss findings "Why is this bug hiding?" b) explore gravity and speed with ramps and cars, mixing colors, or sinking and floating items in a water table c) use phrases like "What do you think will happen next?" or "I wonder why...?" d) share books to introduce new ideas and spark imagination e) play peek-a-boo, turning lights on/off, or popping bubbles f) fill containers with non-traditional bases like dyed rice, “Oobleck” (cornstarch and water), or cloud dough g) place a familiar object in a soft bag; have children use only their sense of touch to describe and guess what is inside h) take children outside specifically to identify "hidden" sounds, like rustling leaves or distant sirens, to sharpen their auditory observation **Creating an Environment for Exploration** a) observe what children are interested in and provide additional materials to extend that learning b) reduce unnecessary transitions to give children time to dive deep into their play c) think out loud, explore alongside them, and admit when you do not know the answer d) accept that deep exploration often leads to disorder; allow children to help in the cleanup as part of the learning cycle e) provide unstructured time; pockets of empty time often lead children to invent their own complex games and inquiries	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely

8. I utilize the outdoor space as an extension of the playroom, providing opportunities for nature exploration, physical activity and sensory experiences.	• move easels, sensory tables, block corner materials, and dramatic play props outdoors to encourage larger-scale creativity • implement mud kitchens, gardening, and water play stations to stimulate scientific thinking and natural curiosity • create cozy nooks under trees or in small tents with baskets of books and soft rugs for reading • ensure the outdoor area is as organized as the indoor playroom, with labeled, accessible storage so children can independently select and tidy up materials • view all weather as a learning opportunity; provide appropriate gear (rain boots, coats) so children can explore puddles, wind, and snow year-round	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely
9. The environment is designed to create a positive and welcoming atmosphere to foster the love of learning.	• decorate with welcoming, culturally diverse, and child-centered artwork or displays that reflect the children's interests • ensure the space is safe to build trust, allowing children to feel secure and comfortable • build one-on-one time with each child to nurture emotional bonds • focus on "serve and return" interactions responding to a child's cues with empathy and curiosity • display diverse books, multicultural images, and family photographs at the children's eye level so they see themselves represented	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely
10. The environment acts as a teacher by reflecting the diverse cultures, families, and languages of the community.	• hang artwork created by children that reflects their own lives, alongside photos of their families, rather than using store-bought, generic, or stereotypical imagery • display environmental print in the languages spoken at home; use music, dance, and literature from different countries to expose children to global traditions • incorporate, rather than just celebrate, diverse cultures into daily lessons through books, music, and art, which validates children's identities • curate a collection of multicultural books and stories that feature diverse characters in non-stereotypical roles • instead of limiting diversity to "International Days," weave multicultural music, greetings in different languages, and diverse role models into daily routines	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely

Pedagogical Approach Five

Pedagogical Documentation can spark conversations and invite families to participate in their child's learning journey. It is a powerful tool that transforms observation into a dynamic process of learning, reflection, and collaboration, ultimately enriching the educational experience for everyone involved.

Pedagogical documentation in the context of "How Does Learning Happen?" is a process of recording, interpreting, and making visible children's learning, thinking, and experiences, rather than just documenting behaviors or outcomes. It serves as a tool for educators to co-learn with children and families, aligning with the four foundations of belonging, well-being, engagement and expression.

Pedagogical Documentation	Ways to promote pedagogical documentation	Self-reflection
1. My reflections and insights gained from documentation inform me on how I can extend children's learning and create new learning opportunities.	• **Analyze**: study the documentation to uncover the "why" behind a child's actions; What theories are they testing? What puzzles them? • **Respond**: use your analysis to plan specific "next steps," such as: ○ invitations: setting up materials in an inviting way for children to explore freely • **Provocations**: introducing materials that provide a specific challenge or deepen a current interest • **Proposals:** making exploratory suggestions like "What if we...?" to encourage children to explain their thinking	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely

2. I use learning stories that include observations, reflections, and interpretations of the children's learning process.	• **Observation** - describe what happened, including specific actions, conversations, and interactions
	  ○ Maya (3 years) spent 15 minutes building a tall magnetic tile tower. When it fell, she sat, looked at the pieces, and said, "Too heavy on top." She rebuilt it, placing larger pieces at the base this time.
	• **Interpretation** - identify the learning happening, such as "developing persistence" or "testing hypothesis"
	  ○ Maya is demonstrating improved spatial awareness and engineering skills (cognitive). She is showing a "growth mindset" by identifying the cause of the collapse and adjusting her strategy (disposition).
	• **Reflection** - explain why this moment matters, connecting it to child development principles and previous experiences
	  ○ This shows a significant step in her problem-solving abilities and persistence when faced with challenges.
	• **Future Action** - briefly outline how to extend this interest in future, such as adding new materials or posing questions
	  ○ To encourage this interest, I will add magnetic triangles to the block area to explore different structural shapes.
		☐ Often
		☐ Sometimes
		☐ Rarely

3. I use documentation to communicate children's learning process and foster collaboration with families.	• display photos of activities, child artwork, and quotes to show the learning process, helping families understand that children learn through play • use apps, emails, or journals to share daily or weekly moments, allowing busy families to stay connected • maintain personalized, visual collections of a child's work and development, which can be reviewed during conferences to track progress over time • clearly communicate the "why" behind an activity and how it supports development • use documented evidence to discuss children's strengths and co-construct understanding with parents	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely
4. My documentation provides a glance into the playroom, moving beyond "*what we did today*" to explain "*how and why children are learning".*	• rather than just recording that children played with blocks, documentation focuses on the why (e.g., they are testing gravity, building social connections, or exploring structural engineering) • use a "thinking lens" to look past the surface of play to identify children's underlying intentions, passions, and complex ideas • documentation is rooted in observing how children experience belonging, well-being, engagement, and expression, as described in Ontario's pedagogy for the early years • by documenting, educators become partners in learning, negotiating the environment and curriculum with children based on their expressed interests • link the play to broader learning outcomes, such as early literacy (e.g., through "ice cream truck" signs), or mathematical thinking (e.g., through sorting by weight and volume)	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely
5. My documentation is detailed, including objective descriptions of children's actions and interactions, often accompanied by photos to capture their focus and persistence.	• **Subjective**: "Jason was frustrated because he couldn't build a tall tower" • **Objective**: "Jason stacked four blocks. The tower fell. Jason knocked over the remaining blocks and walked to the book corner" • **Anecdotal Records**: brief narratives of specific, meaningful, or unexpected incidents written after the event • **Running Records**: detailed, sequential, present-tense accounts of everything a child does over a specific time • **Documentation Panels/Portfolios**: collections of photos, work samples, and quotes that make learning visible	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely

6. I analyze documentation to tailor my teaching practices and curriculum.	• study documentation to identify missed insights, ask questions about children's inquiries, and adjust teaching strategies • identify children's developmental milestones and learning gaps to tailor support • documenting interests, strengths, and challenges enables educators to build curricula directly around what children are currently exploring • analyze documentation during team meetings to foster professional dialogue and shared understanding of child development • meaningful documentation links everyday play to specific learning outcomes, such as those found in the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF), ensuring that children meet developmental milestones through self-directed play	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely
7. I create story boards using a sequence of photos or images with brief captions to showcase the progression of a project, highlighting children's engagement and discoveries.	• break the project down into major, chronological milestones; add images that follow a chronological, straight, and logical order (e.g., reading left-to-right, top-to-bottom) • if the project is long, don't show every single step; pick the three most transformative moments to avoid clutter • captions are short, ideally not exceeding two bullet points per image • explain the why behind a step, not just the what • share the storyboard with stakeholders to ensure everyone is aligned on the project's direction	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely
8. I reflect on documentation to critically evaluate my pedagogical approaches, identify areas for improvement and refine my teaching strategies.	• identify if current pedagogical methods are addressing children's learning needs or if adjustments are necessary • shift the focus from measuring children against pre-set developmental milestones toward a formative understanding of their unique capabilities and interests • use documentation to review my own teaching patterns, bringing subconscious biases into the conscious mind to identify how their actions influence child outcomes • collecting diverse data (e.g., audio, video, and notes) during everyday moments rather than just special events • use insights to modify the environment and pedagogical strategies, ensuring they align with the children's evolving needs	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely
9. I use pedagogical documentation to help families gain a clear picture of their children's learning experiences, foster a sense of connection and involvement.	• create narratives that highlight a child's progress, interests, and development over time • highlight the thinking, questions, and theories children are constructing rather than just the final product • use documentation as a basis for conversation with families, allowing them to share their own insights into their child's development • help families see "ordinary moments" through a new lens, moving focus away from standardized outcomes toward a deeper appreciation of a child's unique way of knowing • avoid mere captions; instead, describe why an event was important and what skills (e.g., social negotiation, mathematical thinking) were emerging	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely

10. I record and transcribe children's dialogues to understand their thinking and questions.	• write quick, objective, and detailed notes of specific conversations or interactions, focusing on the child's exact words, actions, and the context • maintain a dedicated notebook to record questions, theories, and ideas children express, which helps in identifying learning, interests, and developmental milestones • questions like "What else can we add to that?" or "Tell me more about that" to encourage deeper, more detailed responses • document not just what the child says, but also what they are doing with their bodies, facial expressions, and gestures • write down exactly what you hear and see without adding personal judgment **Note on Privacy: Always ensure you have documented parent consent before using audio or video recording devices in a childcare setting.**	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely

Pedagogical Approach Six

Foster a culture where **Reflection** is valued, practiced, and integrated into the fabric of daily work, leading to improved performance, innovation, and individual growth.

Reflection in the framework of "How Does Learning Happen?", is a critical, ongoing process where educators examine their practice, beliefs, and interactions to improve outcomes for children, families, and themselves. It moves beyond simply doing activities to understanding the "why" behind pedagogical choices, ensuring that actions align with the four foundations of learning.

Reflective Practice and Collaborative Inquiry	Ways to promote reflective practice and collaborative inquiry	Self-reflection
1. I use reflections to connect the learning experiences to How Does Learning Happen principles and pedagogical approaches.	• **Belonging**: reflect on how the experience fostered relationships and connections; Did the child feel valued or contribute to the group? • **Well-being:** connect the experience to the child's physical and mental health; Did it support their sense of self-regulation, or physical capabilities? • **Engagement:** describe how the child explored the world with natural curiosity; Was there deep focus, problem-solving, or innovation during play? • **Expression:** reflect on how the child communicated and expressed thoughts; this includes creative expression, body language, and "the hundred languages of children • **Responsive Relationships**: reflect on how you follow the child's lead or engage in "serve and return" interactions • **Learning Through Play and Inquiry**: describe how you used open-ended materials or the environment (the "third teacher") to spark curiosity • **Educators as Co-learners**: note where you learned alongside the child rather than just directing them, challenging your own assumptions through critical reflection • **Pedagogical Documentation**: use photos, notes, and artifacts to make learning visible, then ask "What next?" to plan future experiences	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely
2. I critically examine my work and learn from others.	**What?** describe the task, your role, and your initial reactions **So What?** analyze why it matters, comparing your actions against standards, identifying gaps, and examining your biases **Now What?** develop an action plan based on what you learned to improve future performance • view criticism as a tool, not as a judgment on my character • ask "What should I keep doing?", "What should I start doing?", and "What should I stop doing?" • paraphrase what you heard to confirm understanding: "So, what I think I hear you saying is..." • participate in team meetings by actively sharing insights and discussing different perspectives	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely

3. I ask myself “What strategies did I use? How did the child respond? What could I have done differently? What new insights did I gain about the child’s learning style?”	**What strategies did I use?** a) explaining concepts in my own words to check for true understanding b) review material multiple times, starting with the big picture and adding detail, rather than trying to memorize everything at once c) draw connections between ideas to visualize information d) creating structure (e.g., outlines, summaries, digital notes) to make information easier to retrieve e) reviewing the day to see what went well, what was challenging, and how emotions were managed f) actively asking for external perspectives to identify blind spots in skills or behavior g) comparing current actions against long-term goals to ensure alignment h) replacing harsh judgment with grace when reflecting on failures i) viewing challenges as opportunities for growth rather than insurmountable obstacles **How did the child respond?** a) children felt understood, reducing the intensity of tantrums and improving their ability to communicate needs b) children were willing to repeat desirable behaviors because they felt recognized and motivated to please c) while initial resistance occurred, consistency helped the children feel secure and understand expectations, ultimately leading to better self-control d) when given limited choices "Do you want to put on your shoes or your coat first?", children felt a sense of autonomy, which reduces defiance and power struggles e) children tend to mirror the adult's emotional state, becoming calmer when I remain composed f) children push back initially to see if the new, stricter, or different strategy is consistent g) when first learning to manage emotions, children might have a "meltdown" as they navigate the new expectation **What could I have done differently?** a) instead of dwelling on, or ignoring, negative outcomes, analyze what went wrong and specifically what you can do differently next time b) focus on high-impact tasks rather than trying to do everything c) ask others for their perspective on your performance d) sign up for training sessions or workshops to learn new techniques e) focus on collaboration and respecting others to build a supportive network f) be more proactive in communicating progress g) take more initiative on projects rather than playing it safe h) pause before reacting to difficult situations to make more calculated decisions	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely

	What new insights did I gain about the children's learning style?
	• **Visual (Spatial)**: children learn best through images, diagrams, and observation; they often notice small details, enjoy picture books, and remember places they have visited
	• **Auditory (Aural)**: these learners thrive on sounds, music, and storytelling; they typically follow oral directions well, enjoy talking through ideas, and may hum or sing while playing
	• **Kinesthetic (Physical)**: often referred to as "learning by doing," these children need movement and hands-on interaction; they may be fidgety in sedentary settings and excel at building, role-playing, or physical games
	• **Tactile**: closely linked to kinesthetic learning, tactile learners focus specifically on the sense of touch; they prefer manipulating materials like playdough, sand, or textured objects
	• **Reading/Writing (Verbal)**: while more common as children ages, some early learners show a strong interest in written words and
	  ○ text-based activities, such as journaling or looking at labels
	• **Supporting Diverse Needs**: using a variety of methods such as combining storytelling (auditory) with picture books (visual) and
	  ○ hands-on crafts (kinesthetic) support all children, especially as many
	  ○ children are multi-modal learners
	• **Inclusive Environment**: tailoring the environment such as providing noise-canceling headphones for auditory-sensitive children or movement breaks for kinesthetic learners reduce stress and build confidence
	• **Impact on Development**: tailoring these styles reduces stress, improves focus, boosts confidence, and strengthens parent-child communication	

4. I engage in team meetings to discuss observations, share reflections, and collaboratively plan learning experiences based on children's interests and needs.	• regularly discuss, document, and review individual child observations interests, strengths, and needs) to adjust planning • agree on how we will work together, ensuring everyone's voice is heard • use meetings to brainstorm materials, activities, and routines that align with children's current interests • share information gathered from families regarding their children's preferences, cultures, and developmental goals • establish shared, actionable goals for children to unify the team's efforts	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely
5. I use reflective practice and collaborative inquiry to design and facilitate play-based learning experiences that are meaningful and engaging for children.	• structure indoor and outdoor environments that invite exploration and cater to all abilities • set up intentional, inviting displays to spark curiosity • watch for "teachable moments" or recurring interests (e.g., a fascination with birds); document these with photos or notes to make learning visible to families • focus on what captures their attention rather than just pre-planned curriculum • promote teamwork, negotiation, and communication through collaborative, imaginative play	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely

6. I involve families and community members in my collaborative inquiry process.	• provide families with written or visual descriptions (photos, videos) of their child's investigations; invite them to add their own thoughts, reflections, or observations of what the child is doing at home • involve sharing observations with families, inviting them to participate in planning activities, or seeking their input on how to best support children's learning • send a "launch letter" at the start of a new topic to inform families of the central question and ask for their input on related resources or personal experiences • host events where families engage in a shared project related to a current playroom inquiry, such as a "transportation project" art night • use questions like "How can we bring families together to form stronger communities?" to guide investigations that directly involve family participation	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely
7. I work with resource consultants to find effective strategies to support children with diverse needs.	• Resource Consultants visit playrooms to monitor, assess, and provide immediate, on-site coaching to educators regarding behavior management and environmental adaptations • consultants work with staff and families to develop, review, and implement customized plans tailored to a child's specific development, social, or behavioral needs • leverage a consultant's network to access additional community resources, such as speech therapy, occupational therapy, or specialized funding for equipment • use a consultant's expertise to interpret challenging behaviors as unmet needs, developing positive reinforcement and predictable routines to support emotional regulation • involve consultants in team meetings and open dialogues to build a shared vision of inclusion	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely
8. I understand my own strengths, challenges, beliefs, and emotions that influence my actions and decision-making.	<u>Strengths and Challenges</u> • when I identify my skills (e.g., patience, creativity), I am better able to foster positive, respectful relationships with children and families • using a "strengths-based approach" focusing on what I do well rather than on problems, improves job satisfaction and reduces compassion fatigue • by managing my own emotions, I am better equipped to help children manage their own, fostering a secure, responsive environment <u>Beliefs and Emotions</u> • I reflect on my core beliefs about how children learn (e.g., child-led vs. teacher-directed) and ensure my daily actions align with these values • as an adult, I must model self-regulation (e.g., taking a deep breath when frustrated) before I can teach it to children • my self-awareness enables me to build warm, responsive, and secure relationships with children, which is essential for healthy brain development	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely

9. Reflective practice and collaborative inquiry help me examine my ethical assumptions and make decisions that are in the best interest of children.	• act on the legal and moral obligation to report suspected abuse or neglect to protect a child's welfare • treat every child and family with respect, valuing their unique culture, language, and background, avoiding prejudice or bias in care • protect personal information of children and families, only sharing it when required by law or to ensure safety • maintain appropriate, trusting relationships with families without using them for personal gain or allowing relationships to impair professional judgment • commit to ongoing learning, self-awareness, and maintaining high standards of care based on current research	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely
10. I seek feedback.	• I ask for feedback during drop-off/pickup, in daily logs, or during parent-teacher conferences • I let parents know that feedback (even negative) is welcome and valued, which helps uncover concerns that might otherwise go unspoken • I don’t wait for annual reviews, I request short, informal 15-minute meetings with my supervisor to discuss current challenges or career goals • I show that I value the feedback by acting on it; for example, tell a parent, "I took your suggestion about the art station and reorganized it; let me know if it works better now" • listen with empathy: avoid becoming defensive; thank the person for their honesty and seek to understand their perspective fully	☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely

1.2 Strengths and Curiosities for Additional Growth – **Individual**

Year: _____

Completion of this tool is mandatory for all educators. It is designed to support engagement in reflective practice and collaborative inquiry. You are invited to identify your ***strengths and curiosities for additional growth*** in relation to the six pedagogical approaches. It is recommended that this tool be completed independently by all educators followed by group dialogue. By reflecting on your strengths, you will work towards improving quality. This tool will help in setting the team's annual goal. Please complete this tool independently and be prepared to discuss your strengths with your team.

As an individual, what pedagogical approach did you determine to be your strength? What statements did you choose "often"? What successes do you have that support this ranking?

As an individual, what curiosity do you have for additional growth in this approach?

1.3 – Annual Goal Setting – **Team**

Program Name:_____ **Year:**_____

This tool is to assist with setting an annual program goal. Please complete by engaging in group dialogue.

As a team what pedagogical approach have you chosen?

As a team what might you require to encourage the team to explore, reflect and apply research and best practices to achieve your pedagogical approach.

* Submitted to ADSAB

2.1 Pedagogical Approach Goal

Program Name:_____ **Date:**_____

As a team, make a commitment to one pedagogical approach to:

1. Increase your knowledge 2. Strengthen your practice 3. Support the four foundations

Pedagogical Approach Choose an item.
What evidence will the team use to support this choice?
Why is this approach important to the team's practice?
How will your journey begin?

* Submitted to ADSAB

2.2 Participants

Program Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Approach: _____

Total Number of Employees	Number of Participants at the beginning of the cycle	Number of Participants who completed the FULL cycle	How many Participants left?	How many new hires?	How many of the new hires participated?

*Submitted to ADSAB

3.0 Gathering of Evidence/Data

Gather items such as

- Family, educator and/or child feedback
- Pedagogical documentation
- Child care software system
- Learning stories
- Children's artwork, creations, and/or artifacts
- Photographs
- Responses to reflective questions
- Staff meeting minutes
- Testimonials
- Interviews
- Notes and anecdote
- Voice and video recordings of children's conversations and ideas
- Self-reflection tools
- Child-led learning journals
- Teacher/child interactions logs
- Portfolio collections
- Before and after pictures of the learning environment

This is not an complete list; it is simply a sample selection from which you may choose, along with any other options that may come to mind.

As a team share, summarize and reflect on all the evidence/data gathered as they relate to the pedagogical approach chosen by the team.

4.0 Yearly Summary of Items Submitted

Program Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Provide a summary of your journey

Access the process of your goal; identify strengths and curiosities encountered. Focus on what you have achieved over the past several months. Determine the resources, tools, training and/or supports you have used to accomplish each step. How often did the team do check-ins to review the goal and adjust your plan?

* Complete one per approach/team
** Submitted to ADSAB

5.0 Analyzing (What, So What, Now What)

Program Name: _____ **Date:** _____

As you work through your journey, we invite you to engage in reflective practice and collaborative inquiry as a team. Write a reflection that demonstrates the impacts of your program's pedagogical commitment, using the prompts provided below as you reflect.

What (Past) - *Purpose*: describe what happened *Questions to ask*: What happened? What were key details? What was observed? What did you feel?
Reflection:
So What (Present) - *Purpose*: reflect, learn and communicate *Questions to ask*: Why does this matter? What are the meanings or consequences? How does this connect to previous knowledge or concepts? What patterns are emerging?
Reflection:
Now What (Future) - *Purpose*: take effective next steps *Questions to ask*: What are you going to differently as a result? How will you apply this learning in the future? What actions need to be taken next? How will you approach this experience next time?
Reflection:

* Complete one per approach/team
** Submitted to ADSAB