

5 ways to build relationships with children

Relationships with children are so important, not only to support quality area 5, but to also build a strong foundation on which all other learning can occur.



Engage at the child's level

The point is not about getting down to the child's level, although that is important, this is more about their energy level. If you are bubbly and enthusiastic and the child is quiet and shy then you may not be creating a safe space for the child. Mirror their energy level to build a sense of security.



Consistency and predictability are key

Trust comes from predictability, and predictability comes from consistency. If children know what is going to happen if they ask for help, seek comfort, or demand attention, then they can trust the response. If every educator on different days responds differently then children cannot trust the relationships.



Respect the children in your decisions

When making decisions inside the service it is important that you do so with the needs of the children at the centre. This shows respect for the children and builds stronger relationships. Explaining to children how this happens through discussions also helps the children know this is occurring.



Advocate on behalf of the children

Children all need an advocate, someone who will speak on their behalf when they might not be able to do so. Some children have lots of advocates and others may not have any because they lack strong attachments and relationships.



Reflect on specific children's relationships

Actively reflect on children who do not have many, or possibly any, strong relationships with educators. Why is this happening? What are these children needing that they aren't getting? Why have educators given up on these children and stopped investing their time and energy? What can be done?