Early Years Twilight Seminar Video

Where to from here?

The first step is please engage with the literature review.

It's got different bits to it. You can dip in and out.

If you're really interested in what is learning, the front part is going to be for you.

So, that's defining those domains that Dan talked about before.

If you're more interested in, how we are thinking about assessment in the early years and how does this all fit with the VEYLD... V - sorry - VEYLDF, you'll love the bit in the middle.

If you want to go straight to the tools, if you thought what Dan was talking about there sounded useful for you, flip to the back.

And we've done evaluations of what we think of each of these tools as well, based on those criteria that I talked about before. OK?

So you don't have to pick up and read it cover to cover. Keep it on your shelf and dip into it when you're thinking about assessing against this learning outcome, OK? So, that...that's the first thing that we want you to do.

And there'll be a practice guide to follow it, OK? So, as with this whole series around the literature reviews, around the development outcomes, each literature review is followed by a practice guide, so you can start thinking about, ‘How can I use this in my practice and my professional conversations ‘with other people I work with?’

That... Then we'll be following it up with a guide to help you with it as well. What you don't have to do, but you could do if you wanted to, is start experimenting with these tools. OK?

We've found... To be honest, we didn't go out and find THE amazing tool that ticked all our criteria, OK? Because it doesn't exist yet.

This practice of assessing children's learning as confident and as bold learners, not just learning narrowly defined, this is still an emerging field of research, so it's really exciting to be dipping into some of these things that have been around in clinical practice, as Dan said, and psychology and other disciplines for some time and start extracting from that things that can be useful for early childhood pedagogy. Alright?

So none of them are going to be a perfect fit, but some of them might be useful.

MELQO's freely available online. Have a look at it. And use it. Some of you are using Early ABLES already. There are ten tools in this literature review that you might want to pick up and adopt. But you don't have to do that. So the purpose of this literature review wasn't to see every early childhood educator, everyone teaching children Birth to 8 using these tools. The purpose was to give you options. So... When I'm cooking... OK? I love recipes. Recipes are great.

They tell you what other people have been doing.

That's wonderful to know. I then do something else. OK?

But...I love looking at what's in those recipes. ‘I've never even thought of using that ingredient.

‘I've never even thought of combining something in that way.’ When you're looking at the tools in the literature review, you might like to have that lens.

So you might be perfectly happy with the assessment practices that you're doing.

Maybe you're doing learning stories. Maybe you're doing something else.

But there'll be something in there that you haven't thought about that might get you thinking about

children's learning in a new way.

So...I guess the literature review serves a number of purposes and I guess I'm emphasising the difference between administering a tool that is following the recipe word for word or using the tool and taking ownership of that as a professional for your professional learning and your professional growth.

We also hope that the literature review, perhaps particularly the front end about what learning is, will help you in your conversations with families.

So that idea of dipping into tools and using the research, that's relevant to all development outcomes. But this one, Children As Confident And Involved Learners, is perhaps the one where professionals find themselves most often defending the play-based learning model and trying to talk about the learning that is occurring there.

And we hope that in your conversations with families around learning, things like executive function, things like the importance of social skills, not just to make the child a nice person, but to actually provide the foundation for their learning, will help you in making that case.

I'm going to finish with another provocation. So hopefully that's given you a few ideas for coming out of this session and using that literature review in your practice with children, but I'm going to finish with one more provocation for you.

Everyone in this room is a learner, including us. Everyone in this room has the potential to be a confident and involved learner.

So now that we've talked about what confident and involved learning means, maybe have a bit of a reflection about yourself as a confident and involved learner, and what are you modelling for the children that you work with, and is there something in all this learning science that you can take away for your own professional learning practice?

We know that early childhood professionals can sometimes be super-confident when it comes to helping children learn, but not as confident when it comes to their own professional learning.

So I'm going to put that out there as a little bit of a challenge, that that confidence and involvement, that enjoyment of learning, that belief in yourself as a learner, is something that early childhood professionals can take on board as well.