**[Catharine Hydon]:** Jen, can you keep going and talk more about those learning stories? 'Cause some people will have already noted that there's some learning stories. It's a narrative-style documentation in the practice guide. Very interesting to read. And, again, highlight that fantastic contribution from our colleagues at Bubup Wilam. And, you know, opportunity to really look through that and see what your own thinking is in relation to some of the documentation. So, why are they there? How can we use those?

**[Jen Mitchell]:** It was a great idea from VCAA to turn this into something that people can read - a story of an educator, of a professional working in an early childhood setting, and working through that cycle. So, if you read the scenarios...They're called "reflective scenarios", because their job is to help you reflect, so they're not there to demonstrate exactly what you should be doing, because this outcome, as with all practice, is so complex that there's no one right way to do this. But what we tried to do with those scenarios is give you an example of what it could look like for a professional to go from that point of wondering, "OK, there's an aspect of identity that I think I can do some work on," and then trying something and then looking again at the change that's occurring in the children. And if you look closely in the scenarios, they're like little learning stories themselves. You can see the educators going through that cycle, whether it's with one child or a group of children or over a short period of time or a long period of time. But I encourage you... So, I'll say this. I encourage you to read those scenarios critically. And you might look at them and go, "I would not have engaged with that aspect of identity in that way." Or, "I can think of something much better that that educator could've done to strengthen those children's sense of identity." And that's what they're there for. They're for you to have those conversations, yeah.

**[Catharine Hydon]:** And I think, sometimes, it's hard to talk about it in the abstract. If people can see something concrete in front of them. And a couple of people have been asking, "When are those things available?". They are online, and Mary will tell us a little bit more about where they are in a minute. But once you have a look at them, you can start to do exactly as you said. You can critique them, you can get a sense of what they mean to you, what you would do, and you can start to think about that. They're a great resource, actually, for a reflective conversation in a staff meeting or something with your colleagues. I think they're really powerful. And, you know, you can imagine, you know, learning a bit more about that and feeling a little bit more equipped to be able to share some of that information with the families and the community that you're part of, with other professionals that you might work with. If you've got some things that you're particularly working on, then that would be a great thing to share with allied health professionals, etc. So, I really encourage that. Do you wanna add to that, Danielle?

**[Danielle Anzai]:** Yeah, just a couple of points. I think one important thing to note is that when you are...any time you're doing an assessment of any kind, whether it be an observation or a standardised test or any tool that's available, you're always measuring something. You're definitely measuring something, but you might not be measuring what you think it's supposed to be. So, the best example I can give you of this is, every year...I'm sorry I keep sort of giving examples outside of the early childhood space, but I find them the most easy to understand sometimes. Every year, again, with NAPLAN, they say Year 9 students don't learn very well because the results are so poor. What Year 9 NAPLAN is generally measuring is the complete disinterest in NAPLAN. It's that s...

You know, that's what it's measuring. They... Are they capable of doing it? There's probably quite a few who are. So, if you want to really start assessing and measuring kids, you... If I could set the time for the best time to administer any type of assessment or observation, it's when the kids have come in and they're having a super-good day, for some reason, like, because that's when your... Otherwise, you might be measuring the fact they got told off in the morning before they left home, they're about to get sick, they're feeling low and feverish. And that's why it's important, you know, as Jen was saying, this ongoing learning thing, which often could happen through the learning stories, is that learning stories shouldn't be a one-off "Instagram" version of an attractive photo and the right phrases and just one-off. It should be... You should hear the child's voice through it. It should be capturing a moment, but then that thread should go through ongoing learning stories where you can see the learning development, so that if a child is having an off day, is there something going on with their identity? Is there something going on with their wellbeing? Or is it they've just...as I said, all the other possibilities? This is a frustration with snapshot-types of assessments where you are measuring something on one day and saying that that's reflective of the child, and it absolutely isn't.

**[Catharine Hydon]:** So, we wanna build that picture.

**[Danielle Anzai]:** You wanna build the picture and you want to take into account all the other factors that could be influencing them as they sit there interacting with something or doing something.

**[Catharine Hydon]:** Well, it's interesting you should say that, because I'd like to give an example in an early childhood space. I have had the very good fortune of meeting a little girl in a service in country Victoria, who, when I first met her, told me that she spoke Spanish and she was the only Spanish speaker in the town. Her family and her were the only Spanish speakers, which she did tell me about. And it was really...So, that was a very important bit of information that she told me. She'd never met me before in her life, but that conversation with her... And I was able to sort of talk a little bit about the fact that I didn't speak Spanish and how exciting that was. And the next time I went back to visit her, she added to that story by telling me that her grandmother was visiting and that they were able to speak Spanish at home together, and that her grandmother came, but she ONLY spoke Spanish. And there was this really sort of ongoing...And it really, um...it helps highlight how confident she was in her identity to be able to communicate that to me - never met me before - but also to add that story. You know, you can see how that qualitative data, that storytelling process in a narrative style, like a learning story, could really help to paint that picture. And a one-off conversation around the fact that she told me she spoke Spanish might be enough to get that full picture, and that probably would take us into this whole other conversation around the program planning process and curriculum development, which we haven't got time for today. So, I want to just pause now and see whether Mary can come back online and tell us whether there's any significant questions. And I note that you've been saying lots of things and adding lots of questions in here. And Victoria and Steph have been answering some of those. But, Mary, is there anything particularly that we think we should capture before we start the conclusion?

**[Mary Holwell]:** There is one thing there, and I think I've interpreted it correctly, but, please, whoever it was who sent this in, forgive me if I haven't. And that is a question about, as adults in children's lives, are educators part of the ingroup or the outgroup? And I thought, "Well, now, that's, um..."

**[Catharine Hydon]:** Interesting question.

**[Mary Holwell]:** It's an interesting question that probably has a whole lot of different potential answers. But I wondered whether either Jen or Danielle would like to comment on that.

**[Catharine Hydon]:** Over to you, Jen or Danielle.

**[Jen Mitchell]:** Um yep, I can, um...

**[Catharine Hydon]:** Jen first?

**[Jen Mitchell]:** The ingroup and outgroup are not fixed, so it might depend on the context. So, they might be part of the ingroup in terms of people that you see every day at your early childhood service, but they might be part of the outgroup in terms of, um...children that are involved in particular games. So, I think each of those concepts in the model have their own diversity and their own variation that you could dive into. If you want to get stuck into the research, I encourage you to do so.

**[Catharine Hydon]:** Read the bibliography at the back. The references - fantastic. Lots of things to do there. And, Danielle, do you wanna add to that?

**[Danielle Anzai]:** Yes. No just that I would completely agree. And just add that I think it's interesting also that...which I forgot to mention before, that sometimes when an educator and a parent get together, they feel like they're talking about a different child, so..."What do you mean she likes cleaning up at school? Or, "What do you mean he talks all the time?" Or something like that. So, you know, these sorts of...That's the real-life... I think that's the real-life example of the social inward and the social outward, and then the personal at home. So, bringing those together with...you know, connecting with families so that you're finding, like you said with the Spanish speaker, those common threads, so that, you know, the child is able to incorporate all those aspects and those components together, rather than sort of, "Well, you know, at school, I'm doing this, "but at home, I'm kinda doing this." It's good if they can all come together and... Yeah.

**[Catharine Hydon]:** And, you know, it's such an interesting idea, Danielle, isn't it, that we don't actually sort of introduce ourselves all the time with our sort of list of identity things. You know, "Hello, my name is Catharine. I like the following things. This is my identity." And I think there is something sometimes when we're talking to families that, you know, "I don't know, should we be talking about this?". And families might feel a bit weird, but it is a great thing to talk about what we know and understand about children. And I can...I have so many...so many of you who are joining us today, you will have had that encounter with a family where you share something that you know and understand about a child's identity. And I can see that that warms the cockles of their hearts. And I just gotta tell you one story about that, 'cause I think it's delightful. A child, a two-year-old who I was working with when I was working at Gowrie Victoria in Docklands, she started to draw in a board she'd covered over with sand and she started to draw images in that sand and just make marks in there. And she started to do this quite often and make all these really lovely images. And we'd told her dad about it. And he said, "She's artistic. My mother was artistic. "And that's just such... It meant a great deal to him in terms of who he thought he was and who he thought his daughter was and the connection with that family. Now, I didn't really have any idea about that, but it's such a powerful story, and you can see families getting to know their children in different ways. And, yes, it's probably about cleaning up, but it can be something about some of those revelations. So, there's lots of things to investigate here.

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