

# ToWe Project

Enhancing Opportunities for Toddlers' Wellbeing



## Toddlers' Early Languages Strategies

**Setting Partner: Heathfield Children's Centre - Achieving for Children**

Dimension	What brought about the strategy?	Implementation	Impact of the strategy
Early languages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion and reflection with the crèche practitioners using the pre-requisite of wellbeing.</li> <li>• We read and discussed the early languages manual and reflected that we do not use enough visual aids in our current practice to support non-verbal and non-English speaking children or their families.</li> <li>• To develop visual aids to improve the way we support children to settle and play during sessions and follow routines.</li> <li>• To use visual aids to find out what children are interested in.</li> <li>• To appeal to non-verbal children and visual learners.</li> <li>• To use visual aids to develop children's independence and communication skills and support them to make choices.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We improved our photo displays for children and adults to show the resources available for children to play with.</li> <li>• The children's photo displays are placed at children's eye level to help them see and choose what they want to play with by speaking or pointing (independently or with support).</li> <li>• We showed parents and guardians how to use the visual aids to help their child make choices.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Toddlers-</b> Can see the resources we have and are supported to make choices which gives them a sense of control, builds confidence, aids communication and boosts self-esteem.</p> <p><b>Practitioners-</b> Use the visual aids with the toddler to find out what the child likes to play with and is interested in. This improves relationships and helps the child to feel secure, bond and develop trust in the practitioner.</p> <p><b>Parents-</b> Are able to see the variety of resources available and can communicate on their child's behalf and tell us what their child would like to play with and is interested in.</p> <p><b>Practice-</b> Is more inclusive for everyone and appeals to non-verbal children and visual learners. The visual aids provide a sense of order; everything has a place, which some toddlers find reassuring. The use of visual aids and photos help to give children a voice.</p>

<p>Early languages in ESOL crèche</p> <p>(English Speakers of Other Languages, ESOL)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We discussed the pre-requisite of wellbeing and identified that the children attending crèche are among our most disadvantaged due to them being separated from their parents and guardians (who attend ESOL class). Distressed children leads to distressed parents, practitioners, children and environment.</li> <li>• We identified that our paperwork is too wordy for non-English speaking families. Without visual support parents and guardians do not understand the questions or guidelines and do not comprehend the role of the practitioners. Parents and children need to see what we are talking about.</li> <li>• Children do not get enough support or time to settle in the crèche before their parents leave them. We identified that a familiarisation period is needed to help children settle in the crèche, to familiarise with the environment and build relationships with practitioners.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The team requested that paper work be simplified for families and accompanied with visual aids.</li> <li>• New visual aids were designed for parents and guardians which complement the existing paperwork.</li> <li>• The use of a 'reality box' aids communication and understanding between practitioners and parents during the settling in period, for example, when talking about complex situations out of context, such as, "does your child have any lumps, bumps or bruises?" "Do you have any concerns about your child's development?"</li> <li>• Paperwork is waiting to be simplified.</li> <li>• Families are requested to attend the 'Stay and Play' sessions while on the waiting list for ESOL class. We would like this to be 'strongly requested' across all AfC Children's Centres.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Toddlers-</b> Will be supported to settle in and get off to a better start because their parents know the settling-in procedure and can communicate this to their toddler and reassure them. Visual aids are instrumental in giving toddlers a voice.</p> <p><b>Parents-</b> The visual aids support parents understanding of the crèche guidelines and gives them a sense of control about what is happening and are instrumental in giving parents a voice.</p> <p>The visual aids help parents understand what is required from them and they don't feel as helpless or anxious as they did.</p> <p>Parents and children are more familiar with the setting, routine, environment, practitioners etc. Families gain confidence in themselves and in the practitioners caring for their child. Adults and children will enjoy and benefit from socialisation with other families in the centre.</p> <p><b>Practitioners-</b> Are able to communicate better with parents and guardians, to reassure them through the use of visual aids that their child is safe and their needs will be met in the crèche and if not the practitioner will come and get the parent or guardian.</p> <p><b>Practice-</b> Practitioners reflect on the pre-requisite of wellbeing and make suggestions to their manager and</p>
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			<p>colleagues about possible continued improvements to the current practice to improve the wellbeing of toddlers and all children and families who attend the crèche to minimise the distress felt and experienced by children their parents and guardians.</p>
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**Setting Partner:** Escola Bressol Mas Balmanya (SUARA)

Dimension	What brought about the strategy	Implementation	Impact of Strategy
Early Languages	After reading the materials, we saw the need to work more on the richness of our own language. We thought that this could be a good point of departure to engage in training that would teach us strategies for working on the richness of Catalan. The entire team took a training course, which taught us how to work on strategies like poems, sayings, proverbs, riddles, etc.	Based on this training, each professional incorporated more work on the language itself into their own way of working by adding poetry readings, sayings and riddles into their daily work with their group.	<p>With the inclusion of language work on a daily basis, <b>the professionals</b> have become more aware of the importance of leaving times and spaces to work on the language more richly as a source of inspiration for the children.</p> <p>Ever since we have started to use these strategies, we have found that <b>the children</b> are showing more curiosity in learning new words, finding out the meaning of the words that appear in some poems that they don't know, and paying more attention when we do more guided activities (such as reading poems, riddles, etc.).</p>
Early Languages	After first working on our own language, we also found the need to work on better incorporating the different languages we had at the school. In order to incorporate them better, we began to translate the stories that we work on regarding the traditions – such as the <i>Castanyera</i> (Chestnut Festival), Christmas, Sant	We displayed this story at the entrance to the library space with the different translations. A few weeks before celebrating the feast day of Saint George, we also sent it by mail to all the families so that they could tell the story at home in their own language.	<p><b>The families</b> were very pleased to see that we bore in mind the native language of each child and thanked us for the chance to tell the story at home in their own language.</p> <p><b>The professionals</b> have understood the importance of incorporating the different languages in school, and they continue to look for different strategies to incorporate them,</p>



	<p>Jordi (feast day of Saint George) – in all the languages found at the school. The first story we translated into all the languages we had at school was the legend of Saint George (Catalan, Spanish, English and Russian).</p>		<p>such as inviting a family to tell a story in their language in the classroom...</p> <p><b>The children</b> showed better knowledge of the tradition and story of Saint George, as well as more interest when we spoke about it at school.</p>
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