

EARLY EDUCATION LEADERS

PEER NETWORK

How we will discern quality research and resources

Introduction

Accessing current research, promoting, sharing and using research, can help you to keep on top of best practice, and shows a commitment to quality early childhood education and care and continuous improvement.

Research can help Educators and Educational Leaders to make the best possible decisions for the children at their service and can help to shape and inform policies, practices and procedures. Everyone benefits from accessing and sharing current research and having the right tools to elevate quality practices.

How the Early Education Leaders Peer Network will promote and curate resources

We will promote the concept that evidence around children's development and pedagogy is generated regularly, and that it is important to keep up with current research, advice and recommendations from reputable early childhood bodies. We will support the Early Education Leaders Peer Network members in understanding how resources support best practice decision making. We will advocate for the use of credible resources and research to build ideas and share knowledge, and co-create a resource repository.

Peer network members - How to find research and resources

Finding research and resources can be difficult – sometimes you uncover them in your reading, other times you need to actively search for the right information.

When thinking about research, it is good to start with reputable organisations and researchers – you can follow links in their work to locate additional resources. If you don't know where to begin, take a look at the organisations below and/or go to Google scholar or another academic search engine to see who writes about the topic you are interested in.

Here's a list of organisations by category and/or topic that you may wish to consult. You and your peers will want to add to this list organisations and websites as you progress and discover new sources.

CELA will choose resources from organisations such as those listed below

- ▶ Universities and research institutes
(For example Melbourne Graduate School of Education, Wollongong Early Start, Macquarie University, Sydney University, Evidence 4 learning)
- ▶ Mental health organisations
(Beyond Blue, Emerging Minds)
- ▶ Peak bodies
(CELA, ECA, ARACY)
- ▶ State and Territory bodies
- ▶ Australian Government and national organisations
(DESE, ACECQA, AITSL)
- ▶ International Organisations
(Harvard Centre on the Developing Child, OECD, UNESCO)

How resources will be selected for the Early Educational Leaders Peer Network

The following guiding principles will inform our choice of resources:

1. Purpose

What problem is being solved or uncovered? Is this an area our peers care about, or should care, about?

2. Timeliness

Was it produced in the last five years? If not, is there newer evidence available or does it remain relevant? Why do you think this is? (Some ECEC resources are decades old but are landmark documents and remain relevant)

3. Expertise

If research based, do the researchers have qualifications to undertake the research. Was it published in a peer reviewed journal? (if not you can use them, but note that results have not been independently verified) Do the researchers have ethics approval?

4. Relevance

Think about how applicable the research is to a variety of contexts. Is it based on a particular community, or drawing on a small sample of children? This may mean the findings are not applicable to a different or broad audience.

5. Evidence base

If a resource, does it refer to evidence? If not, are there other resources that draw on evidence that can be used instead?

6. Ease of understanding

Think about skills required to use the research or resource. Will it appeal to a wide audience? If not, could a summary be produced to ensure the key messages are understood?

How to use research and resources

Within the peer network research and resources can be used for a variety of purposes:

- ▶ to spark debate by presenting research with different or contested viewpoints
- ▶ to build understanding by providing new tools and understandings
- ▶ to build capacity, for example showcasing websites and resources that make evidence finding easier

CELA will seek your advice about how to categorise and host resources so they can be available throughout the peer network.