

National Practices for Early Childhood Road Safety Education: Assessment for Learning

The early years are a critical time to introduce key concepts for lifelong learning. Road safety education is an important component of early childhood education as it lays the foundation for children to become safer road users. The National Practices for Early Childhood Road Safety Education have been developed by early childhood education and road safety experts across Australia and New Zealand. The eight national practices are aligned with the Early Years Learning Framework.

National Practice No. 8 – Assessment for Learning: Together with children and families, reflect on each child’s learning and application of road safety to plan for future learning.

What is it? Assessment is the first step in determining what children know about road safety, and refers to the process of gathering and analysing information as evidence about what children know, can do and understand. As children’s abilities, knowledge and attitudes vary, it is important to view children’s learning in both cultural and family contexts, and to undertake assessment collaboratively in consultation as an ongoing discourse with families. This not only encourages a positive partnership, but also ensures that road safety education is consistently role-modelled in both the home and the early childhood education and care environments.

The process of gathering information about children’s road safety understanding from various sources, allows educators to assess children’s knowledge, strengths, dispositions and interests. This knowledge enables educators to plan and

evaluate appropriate road safety education and to support further learning. Within this context, using this National Practice entails being conscious of continuing to reflect on children’s understanding and transference of knowledge in different play contexts.

For example:

- Embed road safety education into the curriculum using the Early Years Planning Cycle. The Cycle offers a structure that educators can use to capture children’s knowledge and understanding of road safety, to assess competencies, and to plan and implement learning experiences that promote safer behaviours. Using the Cycle can assist in accurately assessing and filling in gaps in knowledge and skills.
- During conversations, ask questions that encourage children to draw on their knowledge of road safety, for example:
 - Tell me about your trip to preschool today.
 - Why do we need to wear a helmet when we ride our bikes?
 - Why do we need to look before we cross the road? What could happen if we didn’t?
- Schedule time to reflect and evaluate children’s learning, and consciously adapt teachings to reflect interests and gaps in behaviours.
- Encourage children to record information about their road safety experiences, so that learnings can be captured as their knowledge develops in different ways – for example, visually, through conversation and so on.

