Introduction to Reflective Practice

A SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING WORKBOOK

Created by

The Halton Resource Connection

Course Modules

01
Introduction

02
HDLH & CECE

03
What is Reflective Practice

04
Why Do We Reflect

05
When Do We Reflect

06
Where Do We Reflect

07
How Do We Reflect

08
Types of Reflection

09
What, So What, Now What

10
Benefits of Reflection

11
Resources



01

MODULE 1

INTRODUCTION

Before you begin:

- Give yourself time. This is a self-paced learning opportunity, give time to process and reflect on the information*.
- Pen/pencil
- Co-worker/friend for deeper reflection
- Printer to print activities, reflection pages or the whole book

*At the end of each module, you will find a space to record notes and reflect on your learning. Reflection is an important part of being a Registered Early Childhood Educator (RECE) and supports our ongoing professional growth.
How Does Learning Happen? describes critical reflection as thinking deeply about our practices, experiences, and beliefs to better understand how they influence children's learning and development. Through reflection, educators become more intentional in their work, strengthen their practice, and enhance their ability to support children, families, colleagues, and communities.
Use this space to make connections to your daily practice, explore new ideas, and consider how your learning can support positive outcomes for children and families.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to this self-paced workbook on Reflective Practice for Early Childhood Educators. This professional learning opportunnity has been designed to support your professional learning journey by deepening your understanding of reflective practice and its connection to Ontario's early years framework, How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years (HDLH), and the College of Early Childhood Educators (CECE) Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice.

As Early Childhood Educators, we engage in complex and meaningful work every day. Through our interactions with children, families, colleagues, and communities, we create environments that support learning, belonging, well-being, and engagement. Reflective practice provides an opportunity to pause, think critically about our experiences, examine our beliefs and assumptions, and use what we learn to inform our future actions and decisions.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this module, you will enhance your ability to:

- Expand your understanding of reflective practice and the connection between HDLH and the College of ECE
- Increase understanding of the what, why, when, where and how of refelction
- Understand the types and benefits of refelction

TEST MY KNOWLEDGE

1. What is the primary purpose of reflective practice in early childhood education?
A. To complete documentation requirements only
B. To critically examine beliefs, decisions, and actions to improve practice
C. To evaluate children's academic performance
D. To compare educators with one another

2. An educator reviews documentation and realizes that only a few children are regularly participating in inquiry activities. Which aspect of reflective practice is being demonstrated?
A. Critical reflection on practice
B. Classroom management
C. Parent communication
D. Record keeping

3. Which HDLH foundation is most strongly reflected when educators intentionally create opportunities for every child and family to feel welcomed, respected, and included?
A. Expression
B. Engagement
C. Belonging
D. Well-Being

4. An educator reflects on how their interactions support children's emotional regulation and physical health. Which HDLH foundation is most closely connected to this reflection?
A. Engagement
B. Well-Being
C. Expression
D. Belonging

5. A RECE adjusts the learning environment after noticing that children are showing increased curiosity about insects outdoors. Which CECE Standard of Practice is most closely demonstrated?
A. Standard II: Curriculum and Pedagogy
B. Standard V: Professional Boundaries
C. Standard VI: Confidentiality
D. Standard III: Duty to Report

6. Reflective practice encourages educators to view children as:
A. Needing constant direction from adults
B. Competent, capable, curious, and rich in potential
C. Primarily preparing for school readiness tests
D. Passive recipients of information

7. When educators seek feedback from colleagues and engage in ongoing professional learning, which CECE Standard is most evident?
A. Standard IV: Professionalism and Leadership
B. Standard III: Safety, Health and Well-Being
C. Standard I: Caring and Responsive Relationships
D. Standard VI: Confidentiality

8. During reflection, an educator realizes they have not been incorporating families' cultural perspectives into the program. Which ethical responsibility should guide their next steps?
A. Responsibilities to Families
B. Responsibilities to the Community Only
C. Responsibilities to Administration
D. Responsibilities to Funding Agencies

9. Which question best reflects a mindset of reflective practice?
A. “Did the children complete the activity?”
B. “Why didn't the children listen?”
C. “What are the children communicating through their actions, and how can I respond more effectively?”
D. “How quickly can I finish my documentation?”

10. An educator notices that quieter children rarely contribute during group discussions. Reflecting on this observation, they introduce multiple ways for children to communicate through art, movement, and storytelling. Which HDLH foundation is most directly supported?
A. Belonging
B. Engagement
C. Well-Being
D. Expression

Answers found on Pg 62

KNOWLEDGE & INSIGHTS

What I know/unserstand about reflective practice

What I would like to learn more about

My Refelctions and Notes

02



cece
college of early childhood educators

cpl
continuous professional learning

MODULE 2

HDLH AND THE COLLEGE OF ECE

REFLECTIVE PRACTICE & HOW DOES LEARNING HAPPEN?

Reflective practice and How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years (HDLH) are closely connected because both view educators as thoughtful, responsive, and lifelong learners. HDLH highlights reflective practice and inquiry as important parts of professional learning. Instead of simply following planned activities, educators observe children, ask questions, and reflect on their experiences to better understand how they learn and develop. This helps educators make informed decisions that support meaningful learning.

Reflective practice also helps bring the four foundations of HDLH, Belonging, Well-Being, Engagement, and Expression, into everyday practice. By reflecting on their interactions, relationships, learning environments, and beliefs, educators can create inclusive programs that respond to the unique needs of children and families. Through this process, educators move beyond focusing on what children are doing and begin to explore what they are thinking, feeling, and learning. As co-learners, collaborators, researchers, and reflective practitioners, educators use reflection to continuously improve their practice and support positive outcomes for children.



REFLECTIVE PRACTICE & HOW DOES LEARNING HAPPEN?

What have I learned about children's thinking, interests, and perspectives through my observations, and how has this influenced my planning and interactions?

How do my relationships, learning environment, and daily practices support children's Belonging, Well-Being, Engagement, and Expression? What opportunities exist for improvement?

When reflecting on a recent experience with children, what assumptions did I bring to the situation, and how might deeper inquiry help me better understand and support their learning?

COLLEGE OF ECE AND STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

Reflective practice is a key expectation within the College of Early Childhood Educators' (CECE) Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice. The College recognizes that professional competence is strengthened through ongoing reflection, self-awareness, and continuous learning. Reflective practice encourages educators to critically examine their interactions, decisions, values, and assumptions in order to better understand their impact on children, families, colleagues, and communities. By engaging in regular reflection, educators are able to identify strengths, recognize areas for growth, and make informed decisions that support high-quality early learning experiences.

The CECE Standards of Practice emphasize that Early Childhood Educators have a professional responsibility to engage in ongoing learning and professional inquiry. Reflective practice supports this commitment by helping educators connect theory to practice, respond thoughtfully to diverse situations, and uphold ethical and inclusive approaches to their work. Through reflection, educators continually refine their knowledge and skills, strengthen their professional judgment, and enhance their ability to create responsive, respectful, and supportive environments that promote positive outcomes for all children and families.

Standard IV, Section B.3 states that RECEs:
"Understand the value of reflective practice and leadership development and how continuous professional learning supports their professional growth and contributes to improving the quality of early childhood education for children, families and communities."

COLLEGE OF ECE AND STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

How can engaging in reflective practice help me grow professionally and enhance the quality of my work with children, families, and colleagues?

What professional learning experiences have most influenced my practice recently, and how can I apply that learning to improve outcomes for children and families?

In what ways can I demonstrate leadership through reflection, collaboration, and a commitment to ongoing learning within my early learning environment?

My Refelctions and Notes



03

MODULE 3

WHAT IS REFLECTIVE PRACTICE?

WHAT IS REFLECTIVE PRACTICE?

Reflective practice is the **intentional** process of thinking about experiences, actions, beliefs, values, and decisions to improve professional practice.

What does refelctive practice mean to you?

Describe a recent experience that caused yoyu to rethink your approach.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN REFLECTIVE THINKING. VS. REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

Reflective Thinking vs. Reflective Practice
While the terms are often used interchangeably, there is an important difference:

Reflective Thinking	Reflective Practice
Invloves thinking about an experience, event or interaction	Goes beyond thinking to include analysis, evalustion, and action
Focuses on recalling and considering what happened	Invloved asking critical questions about why something happened and how it relates to professional knowledge and beliefs
May increase awareness or understanding	leads to informed decisions, changes in practiced, and ongoing improvement
Does note necessarily leas to action or change	is an on going cycle of thinkinng, learning, applying, and improving

For more information watch the vidoe “Understanding Reflective Practice” by Lifetime Training: https://youtu.be/iBmtH0Qx0YU

My Refelctions and Notes



04

MODULE 4

WHY DO WE REFLECT?

WHY DO WE REFLECT?

Reflection suypports self-awareness, self-rgulation, professional growth and planning furture actions.

Activity: Think of a challenging situation with a child, family, or colleague. Reflect on:

What happened in the situation?

What were you thinking and feeling?

What did you learn?

My Refelctions and Notes



MODULE 5

WHEN DOES REFLECTION HAPPEN?

WHEN DOES REFLECTION HAPPEN?

It is important to understand that reflection is not just something we do after an experience. Reflection can happen during, after, and before our work with children. Understanding the difference helps educators make thoughtful decisions that support children's learning, well-being, and development. Reflection happens at three different times, during, before and after an experience. We can look at this as:
Refelction-IN-Action
Reflection-ON-Action
Refelction-FOR-Action

The following pages will give you the opportunity to dive deeper into each one.

REFLECTION-IN-ACTION

Thinking while you are doing.

Reflection-in-action happens in the moment. An educator notices what is happening and makes changes right away based on children's needs, interests, or responses.

Example
You planned a painting activity, but you notice the children are more interested in mixing colours than creating a picture. Instead of focusing on the original plan, you provide more paint and encourage children to explore colour mixing.

Why it matters
Reflection-in-action helps educators:

- Respond to children's interests and ideas.
- Adjust plans when something is not working.
- Support children's learning in real time.
- Be flexible and responsive.
- Create meaningful learning experiences.

Simple question prompts

- What am I noticing right now?
- How are the children responding?
- Should I change my approach?
- What does this child need at this moment?

Think of **reflection-in-action** as "stopping and thinking while you are driving." You make small adjustments to stay on the right path.

REFLECTION-ON-ACTION

Thinking after the experience.

Reflection-on-action happens after an activity, interaction, or event. Educators look back and think about what happened, why it happened, and what they learned.

Example
At the end of the day, you review your observations and realize that several children spent a long time building structures. You think about how this activity supported problem-solving, teamwork, and creativity.

Why it matters
Reflection-on-action helps educators:

- Learn from experiences.
- Identify what worked well.
- Consider what could be improved.
- Better understand children's learning.
- Strengthen professional practice.

Simple question prompts

- What happened?
- What went well?
- What challenges did I notice?
- What did the children learn?
- What would I do differently next time?

Think of **reflection-on-action** as "looking in the rearview mirror." You look back to learn from the journey.

REFLECTION-FOR-ACTION

Thinking ahead and planning for the future.

Reflection-for-action uses what educators learned from past experiences to guide future decisions and plans.

Example
After noticing children's strong interest in building, you plan to add new materials such as boxes, blocks, tubes, and photos of buildings to extend their learning.

Why it matters
Reflection-for-action helps educators:

- Plan meaningful next steps.
- Build on children's interests and strengths.
- Improve future learning experiences.
- Set goals for themselves and the children.
- Create more intentional teaching practices.

Simple question prompts

- What should happen next?
- How can I extend children's learning?
- What materials or experiences should I add?
- How can I better support each child?

Think of **reflection-for-action** as "planning the route before your next trip."

UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENCE

Type of Reflection	When It Happens	Main Focus
Refletion-IN-Action	During the experience	Making decistions in the moment
Reflection-ON-Action	After the expereience	Learning from what happened
Reflection-FOR-Action	Before future expereiences	Planning next steps

Why Early Childhood Educators Need All Three

Strong reflective practice includes all three types of reflection. They work together:

1. Reflection-in-action helps educators respond to children in the moment.
2. Reflection-on-action helps educators learn from their experiences.
3. Reflection-for-action helps educators plan meaningful future experiences.

When educators use all three, they become **more responsive, intentional, and confident** in their practice. They are better able to understand children's learning, meet individual needs, and create rich learning environments where all children can thrive.

A simple way to remember them is:

- In Action = Thinking While Doing
- On Action = Thinking Back
- For Action = Thinking Ahead

Together, these three forms of reflection support continuous learning and growth for both educators and children.

ACTIVITY:
WHEN DOES REFLECTION HAPPEN?

Instructions

Read each scenario below. Decide whether the educator is demonstrating:

- Reflection-**in**-Action
- Reflection-**on**-Action
- Reflection-**for**-Action

Write your answer and explain your thinking.

Scenario 1

During outdoor play, Olivia notices that several children are losing interest in the planned obstacle course. She observes them gathering sticks and creating structures instead. Olivia changes her approach and begins asking questions about their constructions and provides additional natural materials to extend their play.

Type of Reflection: ☐ In Action ☐ On Action ☐ For Action

Why do you think so?

_____

_____

_____

Scenario 2

At the end of the day, Malik reviews photos and observations from a painting activity. he realizes that he spent most of his time focusing on the final products rather than children's creative process. He wonders how this may have imapacted children's learning and engagement.

Type of Reflection: ☐ In Action ☐ On Action ☐ For Action

Why do you think so?

_____

_____

_____

Scenario 3

After reflecting on children's interest in building structures, Emma plans to add new loose parts and open-ended materials to the learning environment next week. She hopes this will encourage further exploration, collaboration, and problem-solving.

Type of Reflection: ☐ In Action ☐ On Action ☐ For Action

Why do you think so?

_____

_____

_____

ACTIVITY CONT.

Scenario 4

While reading a story, Noah notices several children becoming restless and distracted. He pauses the book and invites the children to actt out the characters and events, which immediately increases their engagement.

Type of Reflection: ☐ In Action ☐ On Action ☐ For Action

Why do you think so?

_____

_____

_____

Scenario 5

Following a conversation with a family, Sophia realizes she has made assumptions about the family's cultural practices. She take time to examine her biases and considers how her assumptions may have influenced her interactions.

Type of Reflection: ☐ In Action ☐ On Action ☐ For Action

Why do you think so?

_____

_____

_____

Scenario 6

After reviewing observations from the past month, Liam decides to create more opportunities for children to express their ideas through drawing, storey telling, and dramatic play.

Type of Reflection: ☐ In Action ☐ On Action ☐ For Action

Why do you think so?

_____

_____

_____

REFECTION

Which type of reflection do you feel you use most often in your daily practice? Why?

Which type of refelction woudl you like to strengethn? What strategies could support your growth?

How can using all three types of refelction help you better support children’s leraning, well-being, and engagement?

My Refelctions and Notes



06

MODULE 6

WHERE DO YOU REFLECT?

WHERE DO YOU REFLECT?

FINDING YOUR REFLECTION SPACE

Where we reflect is often connected to when we reflect. Different types of reflection tend to happen in different places and at different times throughout our day.

When engaging in **reflection-in-action**, reflection usually happens right in the learning environment. As you observe children, respond to unexpected situations, and adapt your plans in the moment, you are reflecting while actively participating in the experience. The classroom, playground, or any learning space becomes your reflection space as you make thoughtful decisions that support children's learning and well-being.

Reflection-on-action often takes place after the experience has ended. This type of reflection can be very personal and looks different for everyone. Some educators enjoy discussing their thoughts with colleagues, while others prefer quiet time to process their experiences independently. Think about where you naturally find yourself reflecting after a busy day. Is it in the staff room during a break, in a journal at home, during a walk, or perhaps while driving home?

Similarly, r**eflection-for-action** typically occurs outside of the immediate learning experience. This is the planning stage, where you think about what you have learned and how you will apply that learning moving forward. Consider the places where you feel most comfortable thinking, wondering, and planning. Your reflection space might be a favourite chair with a cup of coffee, a park bench, your car during your commute, or a conversation with a trusted colleague.

WHERE DO YOU REFLECT?

Reflection Style Quiz

Instructions: For each question, choose the option that feels most natural to you.

1. After a lesson, I am most likely to:

A. Write notes about what worked and what didn't.
B. Talk through my thoughts with a colleague.
C. Replay the lesson in my mind while walking or driving.
D. Look at student work or data for clues.

2. When I need to make sense of a challenge, I prefer to:

A. Journal or make a list.
B. Discuss it with someone I trust.
C. Think quietly on my own.
D. Review evidence and patterns.

3. My best ideas often come when I am:

A. Writing.
B. In conversation.
C. Moving or spending time alone.
D. Analyzing information.

4. If I had 15 minutes to reflect, I would most likely:

A. Use a reflection template or notebook.
B. Meet with a peer.
C. Go for a walk or sit quietly.
D. Examine student feedback or results.

5. Reflection feels most meaningful when it:

A. Helps me capture my thoughts in writing.
B. Includes different perspectives.
C. Gives me space to think.
D. Leads to evidence-based insights.

WHERE DO YOU REFLECT?

Your Results

Count how many times you selected each letter.

Mostly A's: The Writer
You reflect best through journaling, note-taking, or structured prompts.

Mostly B's: The Collaborator
You reflect best through conversation, coaching, or professional dialogue.

Mostly C's: The Thinker
You reflect best in quiet spaces, during movement, or while processing internally.

Mostly D's: The Investigator
You reflect best by examining evidence, student work, and data to guide your thinking.

Bonus Reflection Question:
What is one habit you could build to create more opportunities for reflection in your preferred way?

Bonus Reflection Question:
What is one habit you could build to create more opportunities for reflection in your prefered way?

WHERE DO YOU REFLECT?

Where do you most often engage in reflection-in-action?

Where do you feel most comfortable reflecting on your practice after an experience?

What spaces help you think creatively and plan for future actions?

How might intentionally creating a "reflection space" support your ongoing professional learning and well-being?

Remember, there is no perfect place to reflect. The best reflection space is one where you can pause, think deeply, and remain open to learning and growth.

My Refelctions and Notes



07

MODULE 7

HOW DO YOU REFLECT?

HOW DO YOU REFLECT

Finding Reflection Methods That Work for You

Reflective practice looks different for every educator. While some people enjoy writing about their experiences, others may find that they think more deeply through conversations, creative expression, or visual documentation. The key is to develop an approach to reflection that feels authentic, meaningful, and sustainable for you.

Reflection is not limited to sitting down with a journal. It can happen through documenting children's learning, capturing photographs, creating learning stories, engaging in reflective conversations, or expressing ideas through art, music, storytelling, or poetry.

As Early Childhood Educators, we communicate our reflections in many ways. Documentation is one of the most powerful tools for making our thinking visible. Whether through learning stories, photographs, observations, pedagogical documentation, or conversations with colleagues and families, documentation allows us to record not only what happened, but what we are wondering, noticing, and learning. By reflecting on our experiences and sharing our reflections with others, we deepen our understanding of children's learning and strengthen our professional practice.

Finding Reflection Methods That Work for You

COMMON METHODS OF REFLECTION

Consider the following methods of reflection:

- Journaling
- Art or drawing
- Poetry
- Story-writing
- Learning Stories
- Photography
- Videography
- Reflecting with colleagues
- Music
- Blogging
- Mindfulness or meditation
- Case studies
- Pedagogical documentation
- Conversations with a "critical friend" who asks thoughtful questions and provides new perspectives

Discover your Reflection Style

Instructions: Choose the answer that best describes what you would naturally do. Keep track of your answers (A, B, C, or D).

1. After a memorable day with children, you are most likely to:
A. Write about what happened.
B. Take photos or videos to revisit later.
C. Talk with a colleague about the experience.
D. Create a story, poem, drawing, or song about it.

2. When you are trying to understand your teaching practice, you prefer to:
A. Record your thoughts in a journal or blog.
B. Review visual evidence of learning.
C. Ask others for their perspectives.
D. Express your thinking creatively.

3. A professional learning session has just ended. What do you do next?
A. Take notes about your key takeaways.
B. Document ideas with images or examples.
C. Discuss the session with colleagues.
D. Create a personal response through art, music, or writing.

4. When something unexpected happens in your classroom, you:
A. Reflect quietly and write down your observations.
B. Gather evidence through documentation.
C. Seek out a trusted colleague for discussion.
D. Explore the experience through storytelling or creative expression.

5. Which reflection activity sounds most appealing?
A. Keeping a reflective journal.
B. Creating a documentation panel with photos and observations.
C. Participating in a reflective conversation.
D. Writing a learning story or poem.

6. You learn best about children's thinking through:
A. Written observations and reflections.
B. Photos, videos, and artifacts of learning.
C. Collaborative analysis with others.
D. Narratives and stories that capture learning.

7. If you had 20 minutes set aside for reflection, you would most likely:
A. Journal or blog.
B. Organize photographs or video clips.
C. Meet with a colleague or critical friend.
D. Draw, write poetry, or create something inspired by the experience.

8. When reflecting on a challenge, what helps you gain new insights?
A. Mindfulness and quiet writing.
B. Looking closely at documentation and evidence.
C. Thoughtful questions from a trusted colleague.
D. Exploring different perspectives through creative expression.

9. Which statement best describes you?
A. "I discover my ideas by writing them down."
B. "I understand learning best when I can see it."
C. "My best thinking happens in conversation."
D. "Creativity helps me make meaning of experiences."

10. If you were asked to share your reflections with others, you would most likely choose:
A. A journal entry or blog post.
B. A photo essay, video, or documentation display.
C. A case study discussion or conversation with colleagues.
D. A story, poem, artwork, or musical piece.

Scoring

Count your answers.

Mostly A's: The Reflective Writer
You may be energized by: Journaling, Blogging, Mindfulness or meditation

Mostly B's: The Visual Documenter
You may be energized by: Photography, Videography, Pedagogical documentation

Mostly C's: The Collaborative Thinker
You may be energized by: Reflecting with colleagues, Conversations with a critical friend, Case studies

Mostly D's: The Creative Meaning-Maker
You may be energized by: Art or drawing, Poetry, Story-writing, Learning Stories, Music

A Mix of Results: The Multi-Modal Reflector
You benefit from using a variety of reflection methods depending on the situation. Combining written, visual, collaborative, and creative approaches may lead to deeper insights.

Refelctive Prompt: What is one refelction method you rarely use that you would like to try over the next month? Why?

My Refelctions and Notes



08

MODULE 8

TYPES OF REFELCTION

TYPES OF REFLECTION

Reflective practice can occur in different ways, each offering valuable opportunities for professional growth and learning.

Reflection within oneself involves personal self-reflection, where educators take time to consider their thoughts, feelings, beliefs, assumptions, and experiences. This type of reflection helps build self-awareness and supports intentional decision-making.

Reflective dialogue occurs when educators engage in meaningful conversations with colleagues, mentors, or others to explore different perspectives, challenge thinking, and deepen understanding.

Reflective supervision is a collaborative process in which educators meet with a supervisor, leader, or mentor to discuss their practice, celebrate successes, explore challenges, and identify opportunities for professional growth in a supportive and respectful environment.

Together, these forms of reflection help educators strengthen their practice, enhance relationships, and continuously improve outcomes for children and families.

WHAT'S MY REFLECTION STYLE?

Instructions
Read each statement and circle the response that best describes you.
1 = Rarely
2 = Sometimes
3 = Often
4 = Almost Always

#	Statement	1	2	3	4
1	I like to think through situations on my own before discussing them with others				
2	I enjoy journaling or writing down my thoughts and reflections				
3	conversations with colleagues help me better understand my practice				
4	I often seek different perspectives when relfecting on a challenge				
5	I find feedback from supervisors, mentors, or leaders helpful				
6	I feel comfortable discussing areas for growth with someone I trust.				
7	quiet time helps me process expereiences and learn from them.				
8	I learn best when I can talk through ideas and questions with others				
9	I appreciate structured opportunnities for reflection with a supervisor or mentor.				

WHAT YOUR RESULTS MEAN

Scoring

Reflection Within Oneself: Add Questions 1, 2, and 7

Score: 

Reflective Dialogue: Add Questions 3, 4, and 8

Score: 

Reflective Supervision: Add Questions 5, 6, and 9

Score: 

Highest Score: Reflection Within Oneself

You are most comfortable engaging in independent reflection. You may enjoy journaling, quiet thinking, or taking time to process experiences on your own. Consider creating regular opportunities for personal reflection, such as using a reflective journal or setting aside dedicated thinking time at the end of the day.

Highest Score: Reflective Dialogue

You learn best through conversations and collaborative thinking. Discussing experiences with colleagues helps you gain new perspectives and deepen your understanding. Consider participating in professional learning communities, team discussions, or peer reflection opportunities.

Highest Score: Reflective Supervision

You value structured support and guidance from leaders, mentors, or supervisors. Feedback and intentional conversations help you identify strengths, address challenges, and plan next steps for professional growth. Consider scheduling regular reflective conversations with a supervisor, pedagogical leader, or mentor.

Similar Scores Across Categories?

That's great! Many educators benefit from using a combination of reflection styles. Depending on the situation, you may find that personal reflection, collaborative dialogue, and reflective supervision all contribute to your ongoing professional learning.

WHAT IS MY REFLECTION STYLE?

AFTER REVIEWING YOUR RESULTS, CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING:

Does this reflection style description feel accurate? Why or why not?

When do you feel most comfortable reflecting?

What refelction strategies would you like to use more often?

How can you create regular opportunities for reflection in your professional practice?

There is no right or wrong reflection style. The most effective approach is the one that helps you learn, grow, and continuously strengthen your practice as an Early Childhood Educator.

OTHER REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

Reflection Within Oneself

What beliefs, values, or expereinces may have influenced my response to a recent situation with a child, family, ot colleague?

What is one strength I demonstrated recently, and what is one area I wojld like to continue developing?

Reflection Within Oneself

How has a conversation with a colleague helped me see a situation or challenge from a different perspective?

What questions could I ask others to deepen my understanding of children's learning and development?

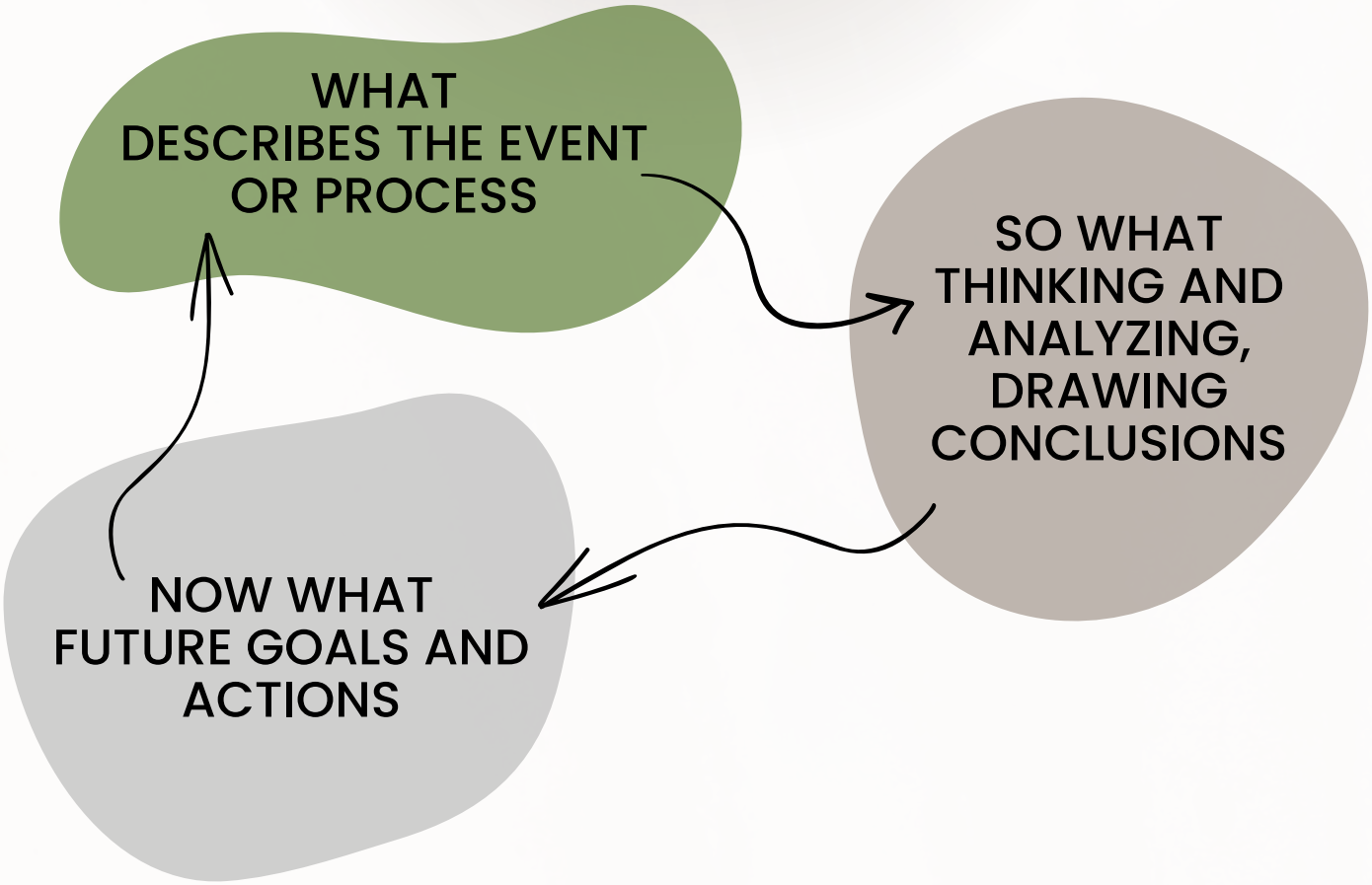
Reflective Supervision

How can I use feedback from a supervisor, mentor, or leader to strengthem my professional practice?

What current challenges or area of growth would I benefit from discussions during a areflective supervision meeting?

My Refelctions and Notes

09



MODULE 9

WHAT?, SO WHAT?, NOW WHAT?

ABOUT THE WHAT, SO WHAT, NOW WHAT MODEL

The What? So What? Now What? model is a simple reflective framework that helps Early Childhood Educators move beyond describing what happened to critically examining its meaning and impact. By connecting observations, professional knowledge, and actions, educators can reflect on children's play, learning, relationships with families, and professional challenges. Aligned with How Does Learning Happen?, the framework encourages educators to observe, wonder, reflect, and respond thoughtfully, helping them make more intentional decisions and better support children's learning and development.

Step 1: What?

Describe the Experience
The first step focuses on the facts of the situation.

Ask yourself:

- What happened?
- Who was involved?
- What did I observe?
- What did the children say or do?
- What actions did I take?

At this stage, avoid analyzing or judging the experience. Simply describe what occurred.

Example:
During outdoor play, several children began collecting sticks and leaves to build shelters. I had planned a structured obstacle course, but the children showed more interest in building together.

Step 2: So What?

Analyze the Meaning
This is where deeper reflection begins. Consider why the experience was important and what you learned from it.

Ask yourself:

- Why is this experience significant?
- What does this tell me about children's interests, strengths, or development?
- What assumptions did I bring to the situation?
- How does this connect to my professional knowledge?
- What surprised me?

Example:
The children's interest in building shelters showed strong collaboration, problem-solving, and creativity. I realized that my planned activity did not reflect their current interests. Their play was rich with learning opportunities that I might have missed if I had focused only on my original plan.
This stage helps educators move from observation to interpretation and deeper understanding.

Step 3: Now What?

Plan for Future Action
The final step focuses on applying what was learned to future practice.

Ask yourself:
What will I do differently?
How can I build on children's interests and learning?
What additional information do I need?
What are my next steps?

Example:
I will add more loose parts and natural materials to the outdoor environment and continue documenting children's building projects. I will also explore ways to extend their interest in construction and teamwork.
This stage transforms reflection into action and supports ongoing professional growth.

REFELCTION ACTIVITY

Think about a recent experience in your program and record your thoughts below.

What: What Happened?

So What?: Why is this experience important? What did you learn?

Now What?: What are your next steps?

My Refelctions and Notes



MODULE 10

BENEFITS OF BEING A REFLECTIVE PRACTITIONER

BENEFITS OF BEING A REFLECTIVE PRACTITIONER

Reflective practice helps build professional competence and confidence by turning everyday experiences into meaningful knowledge. Through intentional observation, analysis, and meaning-making, it encourages individuals to examine their actions and beliefs and identify opportunities for growth. Reflective practice also involves noticing your thoughts and physical responses, allowing you to adjust your approach as situations unfold. By considering experiences that went both as expected and unexpectedly, you can gain valuable insights that support continuous learning and improvement.

How has reflecting on a recent experience helped you build confidence or improved your professional skills as an educator?

How has reflecting on an unexpected outcome helped you better understand your practice and make changes to support children's learning and development?

My Refelctions and Notes



11

MODULE 11

RESOURCES

RESOURCES



@TheHaltonResourceConnection



@TheHaltonResourceConnection



connect@thrc.ca



https://thrc.ca/professionallearning/

Answer Keys

Test My Knowledge

1. **B. To critically examine beliefs, decisions, and actions to improve practice**
Reflective practice helps educators think about their experiences, decisions, and interactions so they can continuously improve their teaching and support for children.

2. **A. Critical reflection on practice**
The educator is analyzing observations and considering how their program may be affecting children's participation, which is a key part of reflective practice.

3. **C. Belonging**
Belonging focuses on creating connections and helping children and families feel valued, accepted, and included in the learning community.

4. **B. Well-Being**
Well-Being relates to children's physical and mental health, emotional self-regulation, and sense of safety and security.

5. **A. Standard II: Curriculum and Pedagogy**
This standard focuses on observing children, responding to their interests, and creating meaningful learning experiences that build on their curiosity.

6. **B. Competent, capable, curious, and rich in potential**
This view of children is a foundational principle of How Does Learning Happen? and guides educators to build on children's strengths and abilities.

7. **A. Standard IV: Professionalism and Leadership**
This standard emphasizes continuous learning, professional growth, and reflecting on practice to improve outcomes for children and families.

8. **A. Responsibilities to Families**
The Code of Ethics highlights the importance of respecting families' cultures, values, and perspectives and incorporating them into the learning environment.

9. **C. "What are the children communicating through their actions, and how can I respond more effectively?"**
Reflective practice involves being curious, considering children's perspectives, and thinking about how educators can improve their responses and support.

10. **D. Expression**
Expression focuses on providing children with many ways to communicate their thoughts, ideas, feelings, and learning experiences.

When does reflection happen?

1- Reflection-in-Action
2- Reflection-on-Action
3- Reflection-for-Action
4- Reflection-in-Action
5- Reflection-on-Action
6- Reflection-for-Action

Key Learning: Effective reflective practice involves all three types of reflection. Educators reflect during experiences, after experiences, and in preparation for future experiences to continuously improve their practice and support positive outcomes for children and families.

thank you

Thank you for taking the time to go through this information. We hope that it supports you in understanding reflective practive and why it is important for early childhood educaotrs

For more information and further professional learning opportunities please visit THRC's website.