

Child portfolios

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Portfolios are a journey of a child's learning and development in a visual way.

With the introduction of the EYLF there has been the introduction of the popular Portfolio. Portfolios are considered the most common form of documentation to show families their child's progress throughout the year and then given to families to take home at the end of the year.

A portfolio can come in many forms. It really is only limited by your imagination as to the presentation of it (or perhaps your service) and can more commonly be in the way of a folder, a box, accordion filing system, online, electronically, photo album, etc. Portfolios and their presentation have progressed during time and are now much more than a just a place to store artwork and photos.

What is a Portfolio?

Put simply a portfolio is a record of the child's process of learning: what they have learnt and how, through a collection of various assessments and documentation, that reflects a child's progress of development and learning.

Rather than seen as a chore it ought to be seen as a celebration of achievement of what a child can do...their abilities, accomplishments, and developmental progress, displayed through genuine examples. Because portfolio development is an ongoing, never-ending process, the sharing of each child's progress can occur whenever desired by staff or parents.

What is the overall purpose of a Portfolio?

The purpose of doing a Portfolio for each child is a perfect opportunity to display documented evidence and samples of a child's achievement throughout the year. A portfolio has multi-pronged benefits. As an educator they offer a succinct chronological opportunity to monitor and reflect on an individual child's efforts and achievements. For children and families, portfolios enable them to be part of the service and their child's place within that service. It enables and fosters a collaborative approach.

Where Portfolios should be kept?

They should be kept within easy view of, and accessible to, both parents and children.

What can be included in Portfolios?

There is no right or wrong in terms of setting up and contributing items to a portfolio. It is not prescriptive. Examples of photos, drawings, conversational notes, and observations are included in the forms of documentation used.

A good portfolio should contain a collection of organised, purposeful information by and about an individual child. Portfolios can include various observations, photos, learning stories, conversations, reflections, descriptions, developmental checklists, art work samples, summaries/reports (if applicable), family input, feedback forms, questions and analysis and much more.

How often is a Portfolio added to?

As with observations establishing a system of tracking what, how and when additions are included to a child's portfolio is key to the success of the portfolio and the building of a timeline learning journey for that child.

Items can be added as you go, daily, weekly, monthly it is really what works best for yourself. There is not a set

timeframe, although having a checklist or spreadsheet system to tick off will be beneficial in checking the evidence being collected and added and ensure that all children have regularly added items to their portfolio.

A good tip to remember is: as the child completes something to be added to the portfolio only do so once a copy has been made for your records.