Fostering Wellbeing In Early Childhood



OVERVIEW

At the heart of every behaviour, every moment of curiosity, and every learning opportunity is a child's sense of wellbeing. *Fostering Wellbeing in Early Childhood* is a supportive, evidence-informed course designed to help educators understand what drives children's behaviour and how to respond in ways that nurture connection, safety, and lifelong learning.

Using the Phoenix Cups Framework as a tool for understanding children's behaviours, this course invites educators to look beneath behaviour and explore the universal human needs behind it: Safety, Connection, Freedom, Mastery, and Fun. When we understand these needs, and how children express them, we can plan, teach, and respond in ways that strengthen emotional security, engagement, and belonging.

Grounded in play-based, child-centred pedagogy, this course explores practical, real-world strategies to support educators to refine their practice, deepen their relational skills, and create environments where all children feel seen, understood, and supported.

WE WILL...

- Explore children's fundamental human needs through the Phoenix Cups Framework and examine how they shape children's behaviour, wellbeing and learning.
- Use real examples, videos and practical workbook activities to support educators in interpreting children's behaviours through a needs-centred lens rather than a compliance focused one.
- Examine evidence, theory and neuroscience to build your confidence in applying needs-based, guidance-oriented strategies.
- Engage in shared critical reflection and examine how these strategies can be implemented and interwoven into everyday practice in your specific context.

DELIVERY MODE OFFERINGS:

1. Self-paced online course
2. Whole day face-to-face delivery
3. After hours workshops across multiple sessions.
4. Live online webinar series.

"I absolutely loved this course, so much amazing information that will actually make a difference to your practices, the way you view and interact with children. I love that there are so many strategies and ideas to put into place to support each need/learner individually. So glad to have taken part in this.

Contact us to book your workshop HERE.

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Phoenix Support for educators

PARTICIPANT OUTCOMES

By the end of this workshop, participants will posess:

1. Increased confidence in understanding behaviours as attempts to meet needs and responding through supportive, relational strategies.
2. Practical knowledge of how to foster security, self-worth, autonomy, self-competence and joy through everyday curriculum decisions.
3. Greater capability to design emotionally safe, inclusive learning environments aligned with holistic wellbeing.
4. Deepened understanding of the Phoenix Cups Framework and how it guides planning, interactions and reflective practice.
5. Enhanced ability to recognise and support individual needs through a strengths-based, humanistic, guidance-centred approach.

THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

Phoenix Cups Framework
Sandi & Chris Phoenix

Behaviour is a child's best attempt at meeting their needs. Children's basic human life needs consistently influence their emotional state, wellbeing and behaviour. Educators responses can support regulation, wellbeing and readiness to learn.

Self-Determination Theory
Ryan & Deci

Children thrive when their core psychological needs are met. Children's wellbeing grows when environments actively support autonomy, competence, and relatedness as the foundations of children's capacity to learn, relate, and regulate.

Guidance Approach
Dr Louise Porter

Focuses on children being supported rather than controlled, prompting educators to respond with empathy, skill-building, and relationship-based practice rather than consequences or rewards, using empathy proactivity to support children's skill development.

Theory of Constructed Emotion
Dr Lisa Feldman-Barret

Children learn to understand their unique emotional experience through exploration of their world, sensory input and exploration and rich interactions with adults and peers. Enriching children's emotional vocabulary and modelling regulation, educators support brain and emotional development.

Read more on *Fostering Children's Wellbeing* on the Phoenix Support for Educator's blog HERE.

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KEY LINKS - NATIONAL

Alignment with National Quality Standard

- **QA1 –** Educational Program and Practice (Elements 1.1.1, 1.2.1, 1.2.2): strengthens intentional, responsive practices that promote holistic wellbeing.
- **QA5 –** Relationships with Children (Elements 5.1.1, 5.1.2, 5.2.1): supports secure, attuned, connection-rich interactions that build belonging and self-worth.
- **QA7 –** Governance and Leadership (Elements 7.2.1, 7.2.3): promotes reflective practice, educator capability and a service-wide commitment to wellbeing.

Alignment with Australian Professional Standards for Teachers

- **Standard 1.2** – Know learners and how they learn: deepens understanding of children's needs, motivations and wellbeing.
- **Standard 3.2** – Plan for and implement effective teaching and learning: enhances intentional, responsive and developmentally informed practice.
- **Standard 4.4** – Create and maintain supportive and safe learning environments: builds relational strategies that promote safety, agency and emotional security.

Alignment with EYLF v2.0

Principles

- Secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships – central to a needs-based, guidance approach.
- Holistic, integrated teaching and learning – wellbeing, emotions, behaviour and relationships are understood as interconnected.

Practices

- Responsive and meaningful interactions – educators learn to respond to unmet needs with connection and co-regulation.
- Creating supportive learning environments – adjustments are made to fill children's Cups and reduce stress responses.

Learning Outcomes

- Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing – the course directly strengthens children's social and emotional learning, regulation, resilience, and overall wellbeing.

Alignment with National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

- **Principle 1 –** Child safety and wellbeing are embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture. The course supports a culture where children's needs, rights and wellbeing guide every decision.
- **Principle 2** – Children are safe, informed and participate in decisions affecting them. A needs-based, guidance approach strengthens children's agency, voice and meaningful participation.
- **Principle 3** – Families and communities are informed and involved. Wellbeing planning encourages transparent communication and genuine partnership with families.
- **Principle 5** – People working with children are suitable and supported. Educators develop reflective, relational skills that strengthen safe, attuned practice.
- **Principle 6** – Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child-focused. The focus shifts from blame or behaviour management to understanding needs and providing support.

KEY LINKS - QLD

Alignment with the Kindy Uplift Key Priority Areas

Social & Emotional Skills
- Strengthens educator understanding of children's basic human life needs.
- Builds capability in co-regulation, resilience-building, and attuned responses.
- Supports predictable yet flexible environments where children feel secure and ready to engage.

Access & Inclusion
- Promotes relational, needs-based and trauma-informed practice that reduces barriers to participation.
- Helps educators adapt environments and interactions to meet diverse needs.
- Ensures equitable engagement for children experiencing vulnerability or developmental differences.

Physical & Gross Motor Skills
- Encourages movement-based regulatory strategies (e.g., proprioceptive play) that support emotional regulation.
- Links physical movement and sensory input with stress reduction and wellbeing, enhancing children's readiness to participate.

Oral Language & Communication
- Uses connection-rich strategies such as serve-and-returns and educator tools that build everyday communication skills.
- Models emotional granulation vocabulary and language for problem-solving and expressing needs.
- Strengthens educators confidence supporting childrens expressive and receptive language.

Alignment with QKLG

Wellbeing
- Deepens educator understanding of stress, emotions and behaviour so children experience emotional safety and co-regulation.
- Builds children's capacity for resilience, emotional regulation and healthy coping by ensuring their core needs are supported.

Identity
- Creates predictable, relationally safe environments where children feel secure, valued and supported.
- Strengthens children's confidence, agency and sense of self through attuned, respectful, needs-focused interactions.

Active Learning
- Reduces stress so children can engage deeply in play, problem-solving and exploration, supporting persistence and confident participation.

Connectedness
- Promotes empathy, cooperation and positive peer relationships by supporting children's Connection Cup and relational needs.

KEY LINKS - VIC

School Readiness Funding Menu

- Priority area: Wellbeing (social and emotional)
- Link to SRF Menu: https://www.vic.gov.au/fostering-wellbeing-security-self-worth-autonomy-self-competence-and-joy-early-childhood

How it supports this Priority Area:

- Builds educator capability to understand and respond to children's emotional needs.
- Provides hands-on strategies to support children's needs and behaviours.
- Supports predictable, nurturing environments that promote self-regulation and resilience.

Alignment with the SRF Priority Areas for use under Flexible Funding Options

Access & Inclusion

- Promotes relational, needs-based and trauma-informed approaches.
- Reduces barriers to engagement for children experiencing vulnerability.
- Ensures children feel safe, seen, included, and able to participate meaningfully.

Communication (language, literacy and numeracy)

- Enhances the quality of everyday, connection-rich communication.
- Models emotional vocabulary and responsive dialogue.
- Supports confidence in expressive and receptive language skills

Alignment with the VEYLDF

Outcome 1: Identity

- Builds emotionally safe, predictable environments where children feel valued and secure.
- Strengthens children's confidence, autonomy, and sense of self through attuned, respectful interactions.

Outcome 3: Wellbeing

- Deepens educator understanding of stress, behaviour, and co-regulation.
- Supports children to develop resilience, emotional regulation, and healthy coping strategies.

Outcome 4: Learning

- Reduces stress so children can engage more fully in play and learning.
- Encourages persistence, problem-solving, and confident participation.

Outcome 5: Communication

- Enhances serve-and-return exchanges and connection-focused language.
- Builds emotional vocabulary and supports children to express and interpret feelings and needs.