Children's Rights Activities for Early Years Settings

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Comisiynydd Plant Cymru Children's Commissioner for Wales

Introduction

This pack has been created by the Children's Commissioner for Wales with support from Early Years settings.

Using this pack in your setting will support you to introduce the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) to children and their families.

When you discuss children's rights with children in your setting we recommend you use the following language

"Children's rights are the things you need to grow up feeling happy, healthy and safe."

You can use <u>this poster</u> to support the messaging in your setting, or you can make one to suit your setting.

Sometimes while exploring these topics with children, they can raise concerns about their own life. If a child makes a disclosure during or following an activity you should **follow your settings safeguarding policy**.

With thanks to the following settings and teams for their support:

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Mudiad Meithrin

Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years Cymru (PACEY Cymru)

Children in Wales

Children's Rights Early Years Network (CREYN)

Flying Start RCT

Ringland Primary

Ysgol Bryn Deva

Ygsol Gymraeg Rhydaman



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How to use this pack

This pack has been written to suit non-maintained and maintained Early Years settings.

If your setting prefers to use lesson plans, then click here to follow the scheme of work.

If your setting prefers to use responsive planning which you may know as 'planning in the moment' then follow the introduction activity on <u>page 5</u> and then move on to use the <u>Happy, Healthy</u> and <u>Safe</u> sections.

You may need to scaffold and adapt some of the activities in this pack to suit the needs of the children in your setting.

We have included <u>song ideas</u> in this pack, you may have songs that the children in your setting already know that would suit this work better.

If you are introducing Welsh to your English language setting, we have included suggested words you could introduce during this work which you can find on <u>page 23.</u>

This activity pack is a partner resource to our The Right Way: Children's rights in the Early Years training pack. This training pack sets out the principles of a children's rights approach. These are:

Embedding the UNCRC

Equality and non-discrimination

Empowering children

Participation

Accountability

At the end of each section we explain how the activities in this pack support these principles in your setting.

Introduction Activity

This activity will help you to introduce children's rights. You may want to adapt the props used in this session to suit the needs/ likes of the children in your setting. The work across all of the activities would make a good children's rights display in your setting, we have highlighted the activities we think would work best to include if you wish to create one.

Link to Children's Rights:

Article 2: All children have these rights

Article 19: I have the right to be protected from being hurt or badly treated

Article 24: I have the right to good quality health care, to clean water and good food

Article 31: I have the right to relax and play

Activity	Resources / Extra information
Intro:	 <u>Welsh language sheet</u> – if you are introducing Welsh to your setting.
<i>Explain:</i> "Today we will be thinking about the things that keep us happy, healthy and safe. The things we are going to talk about are your children's rights" <i>Ask:</i>	 If your setting uses Makaton – you may want to include the Makaton for Happy, Healthy and Safe at this point. Visit this <u>website</u> to learn more about Makaton.
"Can you show me your happy faces?" (Model the appropriate facial expression) "Can you show an action for healthy?" (we recommend modelling muscles or some form of physical movement) "Can you give yourselves a great big cwtch to feel safe?" (model giving yourself a hug)	 Repeat the actions every time you use the "Happy, Healthy, Safe" phrase. You can use an easy read version of the UNCRC. This lists the rights of the child using symbols. You can find this here.
	- 'Happy, Healthy, Safe' poster available <u>here</u> .

Activity:	We recommend using 3 or 4 props . You may want to use more.	
 Body of rights Draw a large outline of a body. This could be prepared ahead of the session or you could include children by drawing around them on paper or using chalk in an outdoor play space. Show children a bag (ideas about what to include in the bag is in the next column) and tell them that you will be looking at the things in this bag. Sing <u>"Beth sy' yn y bag"</u> and choose a child to select an item. Ask them "What is this/ that?" Model the language if the child isn't sure what the item is. Explain what the object is and why it is important to children. Ask the child to place the item in the body. Repeat step 3-7 for each item. 	 We recommend using the following items: A ball or something children in your setting enjoy playing with to represent being 'happy'. You may need to make links between Article 31 the right to play and the feelings children have about playing. <i>"How do you feel when you play this game?"</i> Healthy food (like an apple) to represent being 'healthy'. Home (use pictures of different types of homes to ensure all children in your setting are represented) to represent being 'safe'. 	
We suggest repeating this activity several times to embed the language of 'happy, healthy and safe'. You may wish to add more items or change the items as children become more familiar with the activity and children's rights language.		

Display idea:

You could take pictures of this activity to include in a display, or use the body (if doing a paper version) and ask children to draw the object you discussed.

Provision activity ideas/extended learning:

- Mark making once the activity is finished ask children to draw the objects inside the body.
- Paint/draw/colour photos of things that keep them happy, healthy and safe you could use our "wants and needs" <u>colouring cards</u>.
- Cut and glue pictures of things that keep them happy, healthy and safe inside an outline of a body

• Practice forming number 2 (Article 2 - all children have rights)

How is this supporting children's rights in your setting?

Embedding children's rights:

- Children in your setting are developing their children's rights understanding
- Displays in your setting will support children's learning and understanding of rights and will introduce rights to visitors and family members. Including the symbols card highlighting the specific right will support this.
- Placing the happy, healthy, safe poster or symbols cards in different area of your setting will support learning
- Children in your setting are learning rights based language

Equality and non-discrimination

- Children in your setting will see themselves and their families reflected in the activity. You will model inclusive language while talking about homes (houses, flats, bungalow, caravans etc.)

Empowering children

- Children in your setting will develop their understanding of children's rights and will understand the importance of rights in their own lives

Participation

- Children in your setting are listened to and taken seriously

- Children have an opportunity to take part in activities that interest them
- Children have an opportunity to make changes to their setting (displays)

Нарру

This section will explore ways you can continue to explore children's right in your setting. This section focuses on "Happy". There isn't a right stating that children have to be happy, but children need to experience their rights to be happy. We have grouped together some rights that are important for children to experience to be happy. The activities have been written to enable you to place them through your provision as continuous or enhanced provision or use them to support responsive planning.

Link to Children's Rights:

Article 3: Adults must do what's best for me

Article 12: I have the right to be listened to and taken seriously

Article 31: I have the right to relax and play

Talking about Emotions

Explore Emotions

Circle time activity. Model different emotions (a happy or a sad face) to children and ask them if they know what they are. Ask them to show you their face when they feel that emotion. We recommend using:

- Нарру
- Sad
- Angry/ Cross (during the trial some children said mad)
- Tired / Hungry (we realise that tired/ hungry aren't emotions, but is a feeling EY children recognised during trialling)

Ask children:

"What makes you (insert emotions)"

You could ask children to draw/ paint pictures of their answers.

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Making an emotion check in

Using basic emotions like happy and sad. Make an emotions check in for children in your setting. You could use the following ideas:

- A doll house with different emotions in each room the children can put their "doll" in the room that reflects their emotion (this could also be used for self-check in).
- Stones and baskets Each child in your setting has a stone that they can place in a basket that reflects their emotion (this could also be used for self-check in).

Check in wall/display - Children to move a picture of their face/their name to the emotion their feeling when arriving in their setting. Remember that it is important for them to learn and recognise that emotions can change during the day and they are allowed to move their picture freely.

Link the emotional check-ins to Article 12. You could add the symbols card for Article 12 or make it clear to children that they are "having their say" during an emotions check in. You could also link it to Article 3 adults must do what's best for me.

Dancing

Play different types of music to children in your setting, you could do this during the session or as a structured activity.

As children dance recognise the impact the different types of music are having on their emotions.

"I can see lots of happy smiley faces. I can see big jumping actions."

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"Everybody is moving slowly to this song. Some people have sad faces."

Ask children how the music made them feel. You may want to play a song that you know children like to help them make the connection between the music and feeling happy.

The right to play

Ask children to share their favourite thing to play. Make a display out of all the children's answers. Explain to children that you will take it in turns to play their favourite game.

Ask them how it made them feel to play their favourite game in your setting. Make links between their right to play and their feelings of joy/ happiness. Also make links to Article 12, as children will need to explain the game to peers and staff.

Creating faces

Children could make different emotions using playdough, painting/colouring, by decorating paper plates, or creating faces out of natural resources.

Listen to me

Children in your setting could record their own stories/ ideas/ thoughts to share with adults in your setting. Adults could re-tell the story/ idea or thought to the children to show they have listened. Make a direct link to Article 12 I have the right to be listened to and taken seriously.

Books – not all books recommended have a Welsh Language version

The Rainbow Fish – Marcus Pfister The Great Big Book of Feelings – Mary Hoffman The Feelings Book - Todd Parr Feelings - Libby Walden Weithiau dwi'n teimlo'n heulog / *Sometimes I Feel Sunny* When I am happy - Little Big Feelings series Awgwstws a'i Wên / *Augustus and his smile* Hapus - Emma Dodd

The Colour Monster – Anna Llenas (we have an example of the Colour monster being used on page 12)

How is this supporting children's rights in my setting?

Embedding children's rights

- Children in your setting will start to recognise the words happy, healthy and safe
- Children in your setting will start to link the symbols to different activities
- Parents/ Carers/ Guardians will be informed by information sent home or displays in your setting
- Children in your setting are learning rights based language
- You will start to recognise the links between your daily work and children's rights

Equality and non-discrimination

- All children in your setting will have an opportunity to share how they are feeling. This might mean tailoring some activities to suit children in your setting.

Participation

- Children are listened to throughout your setting, some of the activities in this section highlight ways you can build on that
- Children have an opportunity to take part in activities that interest them
- Children have an opportunity to make changes to their setting (display)

Empowering children

- Listen to me children will feel empowered by adults taking the time to stop and listen to them, and re-tell their stories.
- Children in your setting will develop their understanding of children's rights and will understand the importance of rights in their own lives

Accountability

- Children's feelings are listened to and you will be able to show children in your setting how you are listening to them and responding to their needs.
- In the play activity you might want to make your display really clear to show children which game you are playing and who hasn't had a go yet. This will help children hold you to account and remind you that they haven't had a turn.

Display idea:

Emotions - You could take pictures of children expressing their emotions or use their artwork for a display. We would recommend using our symbol pack to include Article 12 in your display.

The right to play – you could use pictures/ drawings from the right to play activity to make a display. Include the symbol card for Article 31 the right to play in the display to make a direct link to children's rights.

Book display – You could use our book recommendations to make a display and link it to Article 12. There are lots of good examples on Pinterest.









Healthy

This section will support you to explore "Healthy" with children in your setting. You may already do some work on being healthy that you might want to include in this section, this might include work on dental hygiene or healthy eating. This would also be a good opportunity to make links between Article 24 and any policies you have relating to health and share them with parents/ carers.

Link to Children's Rights:

Article 3: Adults must do what's best for me

Article 24: I have the right to good quality health care, to clean water and good food

Teddy Bears Picnic

Prepare a Teddy Bear's Picnic for your setting's favourite teddy or toy. Fill a shopping bag with healthy food choices, we recommend using real life items when possible.

You could sing the song <u>Beth sy' yn y bag?</u> whilst children pull different items out. Have a discussion about each item before placing it on a blanket or in a basket for Teddy to enjoy. You could ask children if they like the food or if they've ever tasted it before.

When children become more familiar with healthy food and making healthy choices you may wish to then add new items such as fizzy pop and chocolate to the bag and discuss.

You should ensure that all families that attend your setting are represented. You might want to work with families to ask them about the types of dishes/ food they eat at home.

Playdough Plate

You could create a space for children in your setting to make food for Teddy's picnic out of play dough. You could use the props from the shopping bag in the "Teddy's picnic" activity to support children with their creations and encourage them to think about what would make a 'healthy' picnic.

This would work as an independent activity. It is another opportunity to have discussions with children about food groups. You may want to follow your nursery's policy on healthy eating to aid discussions. Children may wish to create chocolate or other treats for teddy, you can use this as an opportunity to have a discussion about the different types of food our bodies need.

Shopping list

Using visual aids such as pictures or props, can the children create a shopping list? Could you create a shopping list game such as bingo or snap for the children to play independently?

Take a visit to your local super market or corner shop to buy food for a picnic or snack time. You could use some of the shopping lists that the children have created whilst shopping.

Tasting session

Hold a tasting session for the children full of different types of food (*make sure allergies and dietary needs are checked before-hand*). Ask children:

"Have you tried this before?"

"What does it taste like?"

"Which one was your favourite?"

You should ensure that all families that attend your setting are represented. You might want to work with families to ask them about the types of dishes/ food they eat at home. You could also ask them to share recipes that are important to their family.

You could put photographs of the children tasting new foods on your rights display.

Healthy bodies

Allow opportunities for the children to exercise and enjoy moving freely.

Whilst watching children enjoy free play indoors and outdoors, comment on the use of their bodies. You could model language and recognise the different ways children in your setting move: crawl, roll, lay, spin, walk, run, and hop.

Display pictures of various movements and exercises that children can complete independently.

Introduce yoga moves to the children which could be used during 'quiet' session during the day.

Do the children know any other movements, activities or exercises to keep their bodies active? Can they show teach everybody else?

Role Play

Opportunity for participation: Give children in your setting the opportunity to choose a role play area that links to the right to be healthy. You could create a role play area such as a café, spa or a doctor's surgery/ health centre, you might have other ideas that suit your setting better. Provide children with pictures to represent the options you are providing them with. Ask them to vote for their favourite.

Take time to recognise the way children play in this area as you could create additional activities based on their likes.

Teeth

Article 24 links to any work you already do about brushing teeth and keeping your teeth healthy.

Healthy minds

If you have a "safe space" or a "calm space" in your setting already you could make links between the space and having chance to relax and rest. Make links between feelings activities and the use of these spaces to introduce mindfulness and other calming activities to children.

Books – not all books recommended have a Welsh Language version

The Hungry Caterpillar – Eric Carle

Mindful Monsters – Fae Sylva

Monsters Don't Eat Broccoli

The Worrysaurus

Y Goeden loga by Leisa Mererid

The Lion Inside by Rachel Bright and Jim Field

Don't Worry Hugless Dougless by David Melling

How is this supporting children's rights in my setting?

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Embedding children's rights:

- By linking activities to the relevant symbols card children will have a greater understanding of their rights.
- Parents and carers will be better informed about children's right by the links you make between article 24 and any policies you have relating to health.

Equality and non-discrimination

- Children in your setting will see their families' culture and background reflected in the activities. You should ensure that food choices are inclusive and reflect the unique make up of Wales.

Empowering children

- Children will have a greater understanding of their rights and what is relevant for their lives.

Participation

- Children are listened to and taken seriously
- Children have an opportunity to take part in activities that interest them
- Children have an opportunity to make changes to their setting (deciding role play area)

Display idea:

You could use the vote for the role play as a display in your setting.

You may also want to take pictures of the children sharing their favourite activity to keep their body active and turn that into a display.



Safe

This section will support you to explore "Safe". You may already do some work on being safe that you might want to include in this section. This would also be a good opportunity to make links between Article 19 and policies and practices you have in place. You could share this information with parents and carers. For example, you can use the language of rights when you communicate with families about how you keep children safe. You could explain how your work supports this on your websites and in welcome packs/ letters.

Link to Children's Rights:

Article 19: I have the right to be protected from being hurt or badly treated

Article 27: I have the right to a house, food and clothing

Reminder: When discussing being safe, children may raise concerns they have about their own life. If a child makes a disclosure during or following an activity you should always follow your settings safeguarding policy.

The Three Little Pigs

The Three Little Pigs is an excellent story to introduce and explore being 'safe' to children in the early years. It is a useful story to inspire a range of 'responsive planning activities.' Many young children are familiar with the story, encourage the children to join in to develop vocabulary and reinforce their understanding of safety.

Puppets – you could leave puppets in your setting so children can re-tell the story of the three little pigs.

Tuff tray/table top activity – you could collect natural resources such as sticks, straws and stones for children to build their own houses

Art activity – allow children to experiment whilst creating art with natural resources such as sticks, straw and stones.

Make direct links to Article 19 and 27 during these activities by using the symbols cards.

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Role Play

Opportunity for participation: Give children in your setting the opportunity to choose a role play area that links to the right to be safe. You could provide them with pictures to choose from. Ideas for role play areas could be: home, doctors, fire station, and police station. You may have some ideas that would suit your children better.

People who keep us safe

Puppets: You could use role play puppets for children to explore the theme of being safe. Observe children while they use the puppets and create follow on activity ideas based on their likes.

You could also use pictures of different adults that children in your setting would recognise (practitioners, police officers, and firefighters) and place them around your setting to encourage children to think about the people who keep them safe.

Build a den/shelter

Large activity: Provide children with the materials they need to build a den or shelter. This can happen indoors or outdoors and could include loose parts such as: material, pieces of wood, tyres and cardboard.

Small/ Table top activity: Provide children with the materials they need to build a house/ den for a doll/ figure to keep them 'safe.'

Who lives in your house?

This is a follow on activity from the story of the Three Little Pigs. You will know the individual situations for children in your setting so should only use follow on questions that are appropriate.

This is a good opportunity to celebrate all family forms in your setting (e.g. single parents, same sex couples, adoptive families, kinship carers and foster carers)

You could create houses for the children to draw/ cut and stick the people who live in their house. This might be similar to work that you do at the start of term when you are getting to know children. You may want to make the links to children's rights during those activities.

Invite external visitors from community

Invite members from the community in to talk to the children about staying safe e.g. firefighter, PCSO, nurse

Or visit local police/fire station

Go on a walk around your local community – recognise different places and people who keep us safe, take photographs of places and people

Books – not all books recommended have a Welsh Language version

The Great Big Book of Families – Mary Hoffman and Ros Asquith

The Family Book – Todd Parr

All are welcome – Alexandre Penfold a Suzanne Kaufman

Books about professions: doctors, firefighters, police etc.

How is this supporting children's rights in my setting?

Embedding children's rights:

- By linking activities to the relevant symbols card children will have a greater understanding of their rights.

Equality and Non-discrimination:

- Take time to make sure that discussions around family, home and community reflect all children in your setting.
- Any pictures that you use during the sessions and in your setting should be reflective of the unique make up of Wales.

Empowering children:

- Children in your setting will learn more about children's rights and will understand the significance of rights in their life.
- Children will be reminded of who they can talk to if they don't feel happy, healthy and safe.

Participation:

- Children in your setting will be listened to and taken seriously
- Children have an opportunity to take part in activities that interest them
- Children have an opportunity to make changes to their setting (display)

Display idea:

- Using the Three Little Pigs as s focus you could create displays that show the children's art work or pictures of them telling the story.
- You could create a map of your local area and show all of the people in your community who help keep you safe.





Songs

We've included some suggestions for songs that may be helpful to explore children's rights. You may have songs that your children already know that work well too. We have grouped the songs under the "happy, healthy, safe" headings. We've included Welsh language songs so English language settings can introduce Welsh to their setting.

<u>"We Stand Together"</u> – this song was written and composed by Sara Lewis and Dyfan Jones on behalf of the Children's Commissioner for Wales. While some of the language may be too difficult for children in your setting, we think the chorus is a good opportunity to use Makaton to introduce the song to children in your setting.

Beth sy' yn y bocs? (We mention this song in a number of activities and say bag rather than bocs (box))

(to the tune of - The Farmer Wants)

Beth sy' yn y bocs, beth sy' yn y bocs?

Dewch i ni gael gweld, beth sy' yn y bocs?

<u>Happy</u>

Song about feelings - <u>https://cyw.cymru/en/songs/cywioci-teimladau/</u>

Mindfulness song - https://cyw.cymru/en/songs/sylwi-a-thawelur-meddwl-cyws-mindfulness-song/

Mr Hapus ydw i (to the tune of if you're happy and you know it)

Mr Hapus ydw i, ydw i (clap, clap)

Mr Hapus ydw i, ydw i (clap, clap)

Mr Hapus ydw i, Mr Hapus ydw i, Mr Hapus ydw i, ydw i.

Repeat with:

Mr Drist and "boohoo" instead of clap

Mr Dawel and shhhh instead of clap

Mr Swnllyd and "hooray" instead of clap

<u>Healthy</u>

Handwashing song: https://cyw.cymru/en/songs/golchi-dwylo-the-handwashing-song/

Dyma'r Ffordd i Frwsio Dannedd (to the tune of London Bridge is falling down)

Dyma'r ffordd i frwsio dannedd, i frwsio dannedd, i frwsio dannedd. Dyma'r ffordd i frwsio dannedd , i gadw nhw yn lan.

Rownd a rownd a rownd a rownd, Rownd a rownd a rownd a rownd, Rownd a rownd a rownd a rownd, i gadw nhw yn lan.

Pen, Ysgwyddau, Coesau, Traed - Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes Pen, ysgwyddau, coesau, traed. Coesau, traed. Pen, ysgawyddau, coesau, traed. Coesau traed. A llygaid clustiau, trwyn a cheg. Pen, ysgwyddau, coesau, traed. Coesau traed

<u>Safe</u>

https://cyw.cymru/en/songs/can-pobl-syn-helpu-the-people-who-help-song/

Welsh Language

If you are introducing Welsh to your setting, then you can use the words below to help you talk about children's rights in Welsh.

When you see "ch" you should say it like the "ch" Loch.

English	Welsh I <i>Cymraeg</i>	Pronunciation
Children's Rights	Hawliau Plant	Howlee-eye plant
happy	Hapus	Hap-iss
healthy	lach	Ya-ch
safe	Diogel	Dee-o-gerl
sad	Trist	Tr-east
angry	Grac	Gr-ack
tired	wedi blino	Wedy ble-noh
strong	Cryf	Cree-f
good	Da	Da
bad	Drwg	Dr-oo-g
want	Eisiau	A-shy
need	Angen	Ann-gen
house	Tŷ	Теа
three little pigs	Tri mochyn bach	Tree moch-in bach
wolf	Blaidd	Bl-eye-th
doctor	Doctor	Doc-tore
police	Heddlu	Heth-lee
firefighter	Swyddog Tân	Soy-thog Tan
nurse	Nyrs	Ners

Links to the curriculum

A curriculum for funded non-maintained nursery settings (gov.wales)

Non-maintained settings

Belonging

My sense of belonging is enhanced by adults who:

- Provide familiar resources that reflect my cultures and communities
- Respond to my interests, likes and dislikes
- Plan experiences as a result of observation of my play choices and preferences
- Enable me to play by myself and/ or with others
- Provide appropriate opportunities to experience my own culture and different cultures of others in authentic contexts
- Have strong connections with my home and local community
- Use visits and visitors to support connections and enhance interests

Communication

My communication is enhanced by adults who:

- Support and respond sensitively to my verbal and non-verbal communication
- Actively engage me in stories, songs and rhymes from my own culture and that of others
- Create environments that provide a wide range of varied experiences that give me opportunities to express myself physically, creatively and imaginatively
- Provide time for me to talk about and reflect on experiences and events that are important to me
- Give me time to process and respond
- Use books, puppets, props and digital media skilfully, in order to engage me in my learning
- Provide opportunities for authentic and familiar role play
- Provide one-to-one, small group and whole-group opportunities
- Provide opportunities for turn-taking

Exploration

My exploration is enhanced by adults who:

- Provide authentic opportunities to play and experiment with a variety of materials, textures and tools, indoors and outdoors
- Understand the diversity of Welsh culture and provide opportunities for me to become curious about, and explore aspects of, Wales and Welsh culture
- Observe, notice and use my fascinations to deepen learning share in my joy and enthusiasm
- View me as confident, capable and curios
- Support, celebrate and encourage my curiosity
- Use outdoors as a learning space
- Use music and dance as a stimulus for learning

- Use authentic resources to bring stories, rhymes and poems to life
- Support me to use non-fiction books and appropriate digital resources

Physical development

My physical development is enhanced by:

- a learning environment that provides daily opportunities to develop both my gross and fine motor skills
- opportunities to experience joy in my physical activity
- an inclusive environment that supports me to move and be active
- opportunities to experience music, dance and games using images, sound and video

Well-being

My well-being is enhanced by adults who:

- Listen to my views and trust choices
- Recognise and validate my feelings to help me to find ways to express, and begin to regulate my emotions
- Encourage me to be actively involved in my learning
- Listen, observe and notice my developing understanding
- Ensure that the environment reflects me and my unique family through careful selection of resources and the content of displays
- Respect, value, understand and support my culture, heritage and beliefs
- Provide opportunities to develop self-esteem through creativity and participation
- Develop my understanding of how to keep my body and mind healthy