

Social-Emotional Learning in Your Service

A reflection and audit tool for ECEC leaders and teams — EYL Networkx 2026

How to use this guide

This guide is designed to support ECEC service leaders and teams to reflect honestly on how well their service currently supports children's social competence and emotional maturity — the two domains that dropped most sharply in WA's 2024 AEDC results. It can be used by a director alone, in a leadership team, or as a whole-team professional learning activity. There are no right answers — the goal is honest reflection and concrete next steps.

1. Curriculum and Program Planning

1. Does our program planning explicitly name social competence and emotional maturity as goals — not just assume they happen through play? _____
2. Can our educators articulate why specific experiences in our program support self-regulation, cooperative play, or emotional literacy? _____
3. Do we sequence opportunities for social and emotional skill building, or are they incidental? _____
4. How do we document children's growth in social and emotional domains, and how does that documentation inform what comes next? _____

Our next steps in this area:

2. Educator Practice and Knowledge

1. Do our educators have a shared understanding of developmentally appropriate expectations for social and emotional development at different ages? _____
2. How do educators respond when children struggle with self-regulation? Is the response consistent across the team? _____
3. Are educators building warm, secure, individualised relationships with each child — including children whose behaviour is challenging? _____
4. What professional learning have educators accessed in the last 12 months that strengthens their capacity to support social and emotional development? _____

Our next steps in this area:

3. Observation, Identification and Referral

1. Do we have a clear, shared process for when an educator has a concern about a child's social or emotional development? _____
2. Are educators confident in identifying developmental concerns and comfortable raising them with families? _____
3. Are our referral pathways current — do we know who to contact and how, and is the process straightforward enough to be used? _____
4. How many children in our current enrolment have been referred for support in the last 12 months? Does that feel like the right number? _____

Our next steps in this area:

4. Environment and Routines

1. Does our physical environment support emotional regulation — are there calm spaces, predictable sequences, and manageable transitions? _____
2. Do our daily routines give children enough time to engage deeply, or are transitions so frequent that self-regulation is constantly required? _____
3. How do we support children through challenging transition points (arriving, leaving, moving between experiences)? _____
4. Does our environment reflect the identities and cultures of the children and families in our service? _____

Our next steps in this area:

5. Family Engagement and Partnership

1. Do families understand how our program supports their child's social and emotional development — not just their academic readiness? _____
2. How do we share information about a child's social and emotional development with families in a way that is accessible, not clinical? _____
3. When a child is struggling socially or emotionally, how do we engage the family as partners rather than recipients of information? _____
4. Are we connecting families experiencing stress or difficulty to relevant community supports? _____

Our next steps in this area:

Overall reflection

1. What are the two strongest aspects of how our service currently supports social and emotional development?

2. What is the single most important area for improvement?

3. What do we commit to doing differently in the next 90 days?

4. Who on our team will lead this work, and how will we know if it is making a difference?
