

PROTECTORS OF PLAY™

PROFESSIONAL
LEARNING

templates



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How to Use These Templates

This journal is meant to be flexible and responsive—just like play. There is no right or wrong way to move through these pages. You are invited to make this journal your own in ways that support your learning, reflection, and wellbeing.

To complement the reflective journal, we have included a collection of reflective practice templates. These templates are designed to support educators in making their thinking visible, intentional, and meaningful. You are encouraged to photocopy the templates and add them to a reflection binder or learning journal for ongoing use. They may be used independently for personal reflection or shared within communities of practice, team meetings, or collaborative conversations with colleagues—sparking dialogue, deepening understanding, and supporting collective professional growth. Over time, revisiting the templates can help you notice shifts in thinking, practice, and perspective.

You might choose to use the journal and templates:

- After attending a workshop, webinar, Pop-Up session, or conference
- While reading a professional book or listening to a podcast
- During or after meaningful moments with children
- As part of a team reflection or community of practice
- For personal reflection and professional goal setting

Feel free to make quick notes, doodle, add sticky notes, or include photos and visual reflections—we've even included pages specifically designed for picture-based reflection. Use the prompts as invitations, not requirements. Reflection is not about completion or perfection.

Educators are welcome to copy, print, and use pages from this journal and the accompanying templates for personal reflection, team learning, or program use. Commercial reproduction, resale, or redistribution of these materials is not permitted without written permission.

Above all, remember that reflection is a practice—not a checklist. Move through this journal with curiosity, care, and playfulness, trusting that your learning journey will take shape in its own time.

Pedagogical Quick Check-In

A Moment to Pause & Notice

Today, my practice was guided by: (circle or check)

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Play-Responsive | <input type="checkbox"/> Early Childhood Framework | <input type="checkbox"/> Emergent Approach |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child-Focused | <input type="checkbox"/> Culturally Responsive | <input type="checkbox"/> Experiential Learning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Relationship-Based | <input type="checkbox"/> Land-Based / Place-Based Practices | <input type="checkbox"/> Academic Curriculum Outcomes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> UDL | | |

One moment of play I noticed:

What this moment tells me about children's learning or wellbeing:

A question I'm wondering about:

One small pedagogical choice I might try next:

Play Advocacy Reflection: Protecting Play in Practice

This reflection invites you to notice how advocacy for play shows up in everyday moments.

Today, play was protected when...

What made this decision challenging?

What did the child(ren) gain in this moment?

How might I describe this moment to a colleague, family member, or administrator?

Protecting play often lives in the small, thoughtful choices we make each day.
It is an act of advocacy woven into everyday practice.

Article 31 Reflection

What does honouring the right to play look like in my setting right now?

In what ways do my routines, environments, or expectations strengthen, or unintentionally limit, these rights?

Advocacy in Action

What is one action I can take to learn more about the Rights of the Child and how they connect to my practice?

- Read or revisit the UNCRC
- Engage in professional learning or discussion
- Reflect with my team or community of practice
- Explore how children’s rights are reflected in my policies and routines
- Share learning with families or colleagues

One small action I can take to strengthen children’s right to play:

How might deepening my understanding of children’s rights strengthen my role as a Protector of Play™?

Professional Learning Reflection

Learning Experience: _____

Date: _____

Facilitator/Organization: _____

- Format: Workshop/Webinar
 Pop-Up Workshop (IMECC)
 Online Learning (courses/videos/etc.)
 Conference

Reflect

One idea that challenged my thinking:

One idea that affirmed my practice:

A quote or phrase I want to remember:

Professional Learning Reflection

Connection to Play

How does this learning connect to children's play?

Action Plan

One strategy or idea I want to try:

What support or resources might I need?

One question I am still wondering about:

Reflecting with Resources

Books • Articles • Blogs

Resource Title: _____

Author / Source: _____

Date Engaged With: _____

What drew me to this resource?

Key Take Aways:

Favourite Quotes:

Reflecting with Resources

Books • Articles • Blogs

What area of play am I strengthening this month?

- Theory/Research
- Outdoor/Nature
- ELCC Pedagogy
- Advocacy
- Active Play
- Relationships
- Children's Rights
- Environments
- Educator Well-Being
- Other _____

What challenged, affirmed, or extended my thinking?

One idea I want to explore, question, or try:

How does this resource support my role as a Protector of Play™?

Reflecting Through Media

Podcasts • Videos • YouTube

What area of play am I strengthening this month?

- Theory/Research
 - Outdoor/Nature
 - ELCC Pedagogy
 - Advocacy
 - Active Play
 - Relationships
 - Children's Rights
 - Environments
 - Educator Well-Being
 - Other _____
-
-

Credibility Check (Quick Pause):

- Sources are credible and informed (I completed a credibility check)
- Ideas align with what I know about children and play
- I want to learn more before applying this

Whose perspective is being shared in this content?

Does this content reflect a single viewpoint, or acknowledge multiple ways of knowing?

One small way this learning might influence my thinking as a Protector of Play™

Reflecting Through Media

Podcasts • Videos • YouTube

Podcast / Video Title: _____

Host / Creator: _____

Episode / Video Length: _____

Why did I choose this podcast or video?

Ideas That Stood Out:

Favourite Quotes:

Community of Inspiration Reflection

Learning With and From Others

Community Name / Group: _____

Date / Location: _____ In-person Online

Ideas, Questions, or Perspectives That Stood Out:

Whose voices or experiences expanded my thinking? How?

One idea I want to explore further:

What am I noticing about what I need from a community of inspiration?

Reflection: My Journey with Land, Place, and Reconciliation

Reflective Pause

How do I acknowledge and honour the land and place where I live and work?

How does my relationship with land influence my teaching, reflection, and sense of responsibility?

What responsibilities do I hold as an educator when engaging with Indigenous perspectives? (TRC Calls to Action 62 – Lifelong learning)

Reflection: My Journey with Land, Place, and Reconciliation

Reflective Pause

How do I ensure my approach to Indigenous perspectives is rooted in respect, humility, and relationship rather than tokenism? (TRC Calls to Action 63 – Building intercultural understanding and respect)

How do children experience land and place in my setting through play and exploration? (TRC Calls to Action 62 & 64 – Integrating Indigenous perspectives respectfully)

What opportunities exist to deepen children’s relationship with land and place in meaningful ways?

Where can I go to build relationships with Indigenous ways of knowing on my journey of truth and reconciliation?

Reflecting on Practice with Children

Date: _____ Context / Setting: _____

What I noticed:

Children were exploring (meaning making):

My Role in the Moment: Educator as...

Teacher Co-Learner / Facilitator Playworker

How can I nurture children's curiosities, honour their ideas, amplify their voices, and uphold their right to play?

Reflecting on Children's Learning



Play Environment Reflection

Date: _____

Learning / Play Space: Indoor Outdoor Shared Other: _____

What does the environment look like right now? (Consider layout, materials, light, movement, and access.)

How are children using this environment?

- Moving freely
- Exploring independently
- Revisiting play
- Creating
- Observing others
- Collaborating

What seems to be engaging children most?

This space currently invites:

- Exploration
- Imagination
- Problem-Solving
- Autonomy & Agency
- Movement
- Collaboration
- Quiet focus
- Creativity

This space may be limiting:

- Choice
- Time
- Access
- Inclusion
- Identity

Play Environment Reflection

What messages does this environment communicate to children?

One change I might make to better support play:

Materials, layout, or invitations to explore:

How does this environment honour children's agency, voices, and right to play?

Play Advocacy Reflection: Protecting Play in Practice

Date: _____

Where did play show up?

What supported the play?

A moment where I chose play over pressure:

How might I describe this moment to a colleague, family member, or administrator?

Annual Professional Learning Goals

Year: _____

Connection to Play

One area of play I want to deepen this year:

One advocacy goal connected to my learning:

How can I plan professional learning that is affordable, accessible, and sustainable for me and/or my program?

How has my professional learning this year strengthened my role as a Protector of Play™ and my confidence to advocate for play?

End-of-Year Reflection

Year: _____

Looking Back

A moment I am proud of:

A challenge that taught me something important:

Looking Forward

One intention I want to carry forward:

One way I will continue to protect play:

Monthly Planner

Month: _____

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

What area of play pedagogy am I strengthening this month?

- Theory/Research
- Environments
- Children's Rights
- Relationships
- Outdoor/Nature
- Active Play
- Advocacy
- ELCC Frameworks
- ELCC Pedagogy
- Educator Well-Being
- Equity, Diversity & Inclusive Practices

Monthly Professional Learning Goals

Month/Year: _____

Book Goal _____

Book Title: _____

Chapter/ Page Goals: _____

Key Take-Aways:

Book Goal _____

Book Title: _____

Chapter/ Page Goals: _____

Key Take-Aways:

Book Goal _____

Book Title: _____

Chapter/ Page Goals: _____

Key Take-Aways:

Monthly Professional Learning Goals

Month/Year: _____

Workshops / Conferences

Event / Session: _____

Date: _____

Key Take-Aways:

Event / Session: _____

Date: _____

Key Take-Aways:

Monthly Reflection

How do these goals support my growth as a Protector of Play™?

Wellbeing & Access Check

Does this learning plan feel balanced and achievable?

- Yes Somewhat I need to adjust

Action Planning & Goal Setting

General

My Play-Focused Goal:

Why this matters:

Small Steps I Can Take:

Who Can Support Me:

What resources do I need?

SMART Goals

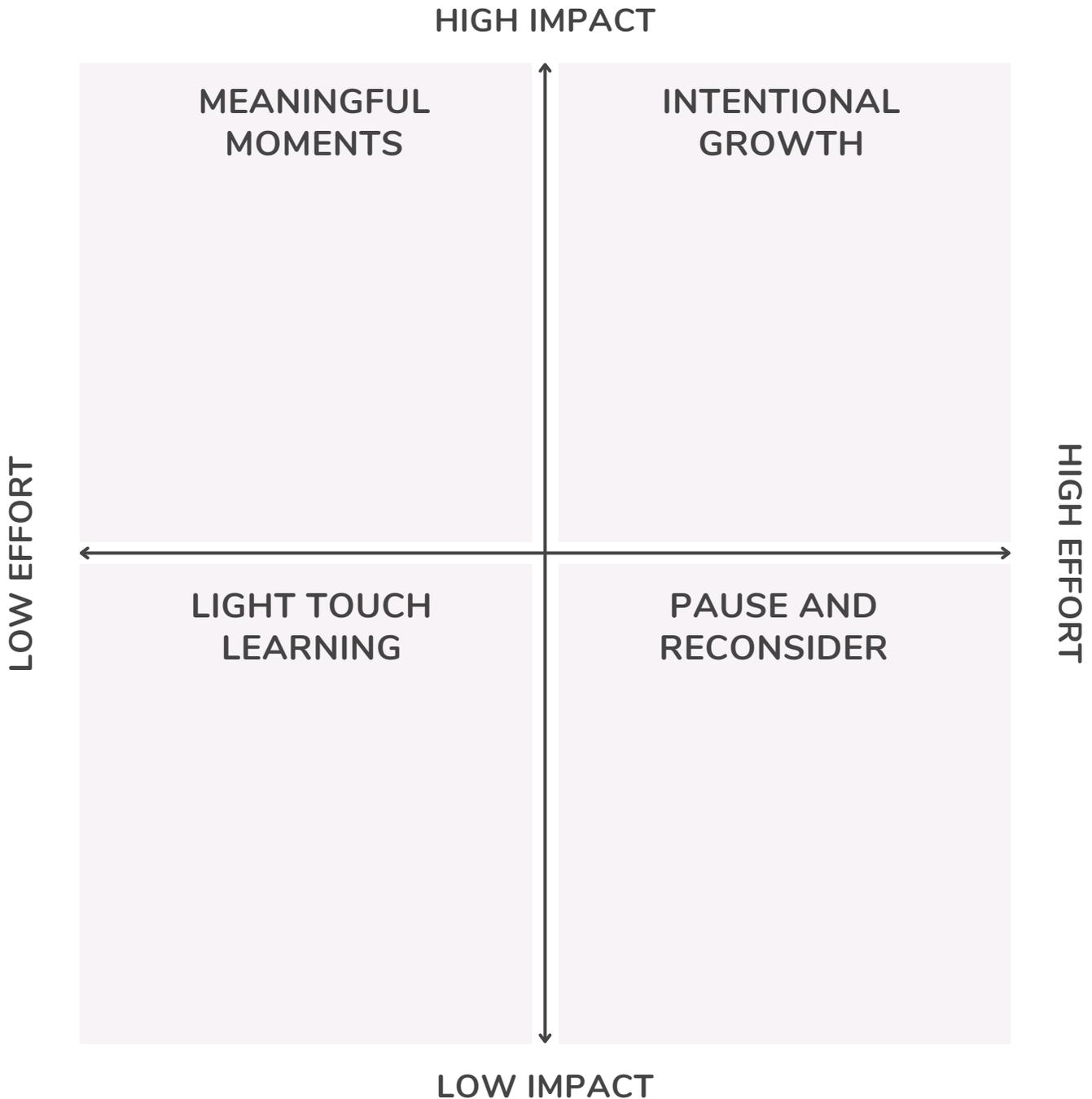
Creating SMART goals helps educators focus their professional learning and make progress in meaningful, manageable ways. Clear goals support growth while respecting time, capacity, and wellbeing.

S	Specific What do I want to accomplish?	
M	Measurable How will I know when it is accomplished?	
A	Achievable How can the goal be accomplished?	
R	Relevant Does this seem worthwhile?	
T	Time bound When can I accomplish this goal?	

The Intentional Learning Matrix

Reflection Tip

- This matrix supports reflection and choice; revisit and adjust as your learning journey evolves.
- There is no “right” quadrant; only what fits your needs right now.



Educator Wellbeing Reflection

Energy, Joy, and Care Check-In

Right now, my energy feels:

- Full Steady Low Depleted

My current capacity for change or new ideas is:

- High Moderate Limited

Rooted in Care Reflection

What is bringing me joy in my work right now?

What feels heavy, draining, or overwhelming?

What does my body, heart, or mind need more of right now?

Who can I reach out to for support?

Educator Wellbeing Reflection

Reconnecting to Play

How am I experiencing play alongside children lately?

- Joyful Curious Distant Rushed Reconnected

When do I feel most present or playful?

One caring adjustment I can make to support my well-being:

One small way I can reconnect to play (with children or for myself):

How can I protect moments of joy in my practice?

Noticing Care, Capacity, & Possibility

Holding Space for Myself

This week, self-care looked like: (What did I do for myself—big or small?)

Were there times I needed care but didn't take it?

- Yes No Not sure

If yes, what was happening at that time?

- Low energy
 Emotional overwhelm
 Time constraints
 Workload
 Caregiving responsibilities
 Other: _____

How often did I take time for myself this week?

- Not at all
 Once or twice
 A few times
 Regularly

How did this level of care affect me?

Noticing Care, Capacity, & Possibility

Holding Space for Myself

Which self-care domains felt supported this week?

- Physical Emotional Mental Social Spiritual

Which domains might need more care or revisiting?

- Physical Emotional Mental Social Spiritual

What do I notice about my needs, patterns, or capacity right now?

What is one thing I can release or let go of to support my wellbeing right now?

One or two gentle steps I can take to support my self-care next week:

- _____
- _____

**Self-care is not about doing more,
it's about responding with care to what you notice.**

Educator Identity & Professional Voice

Recognizing Ourselves as Professionals

Right now, I see myself as an educator who is:

- | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reflective | <input type="checkbox"/> Learning | <input type="checkbox"/> Confident | <input type="checkbox"/> Questioning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advocating | <input type="checkbox"/> Curious | <input type="checkbox"/> Leading | <input type="checkbox"/> Overwhelmed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Compassionate | <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting | <input type="checkbox"/> Growing | <input type="checkbox"/> Motivated |

Who Am I as an Educator Right Now?

The values that guide my work with children and families are: (e.g., kindness, equity, inclusion, respect, play, relationships)

What does being a professional mean to me?

What responsibilities do I hold as an early childhood educator?

Educator Identity & Professional Voice

Recognizing Ourselves as Professionals

How do I demonstrate kindness, compassion, equity, and inclusion in my daily practice?

A message about play, children, or my practice that I feel ready to share:

How can I advocate more confidently and respectfully for my profession as an early childhood educator? (e.g., through professional language, sharing knowledge about play, engaging in conversations, becoming a member of advocacy or professional organizations, or participating in professional communities, etc.)

When we recognize ourselves as professionals, our voice becomes a powerful tool for advocacy, care, and change.

My Protector of Play™ Reflections

What does being a Protector of Play™ mean to me right now?

How am I advocating for play in my professional practice?

How do I invite play into my own life and wellbeing?

One intention I will carry forward as a Protector of Play™:

**Play is not something we do in addition to our lives—
it is part of who we are becoming.**

Thank-you!

Protectors of Play™, are you ready to carry play forward with intention and joy?

I'm so excited to be a part of your journey as a Protector of Play™. This process has been truly transformational for me, and it's a joy to share it with you. My hope is that you experience the same sense of wonder, awe, and deep joy as you continue along your own play journey.

Keep playing, stay curious, and enjoy where this path takes you. And please know - you don't have to do this alone. If you'd ever like additional support, connection, or inspiration, I would love to hear from you.

We are protecting play—together.

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