

# Leadership in Early Childhood Education & Care Services

What is it going to take to successfully implement the initiatives of the National Reform Agenda for Early Childhood Education and Care?

**LEADERSHIP**

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Talented, well qualified and influential educational leaders are imperative. Leaders who can demonstrate strong, courageous pedagogical and organisational leadership .

Courage because there is a need to engage in deep professional pedagogical conversations with colleagues which may highlight differing beliefs and values, question some assumptions about everyday practices and commit to changes necessary to respond to the aspirations of the reform agenda elements:

- Early years learning framework
- Outside school hours framework
- National quality framework

## **What makes a good leader?**

They stand out for their intelligence and resilience , but the passion with which they approach their goal and inspire others along the way is the real stand out trait of a true leader.

- are passionate about what they do
- focus on getting the job done
- believe in what they are doing, communicate that effectively to others
- ability to explain to others clearly and passionately, why and how they want to reach the target
- regularly share information or have information shared for them
- support and encourages leadership at all levels

**LEADERSHIP AND  
LEARNING ARE  
INDISPENSABLE TO EACH  
OTHER**

John F Kennedy, 1963



## The Leadership Role

Leaders will be expected to be the captain of the ship, steering and guiding it through the myriad of obstacles and challenges ahead. But before you can do can lead or steer others, before you can help others, you have to discover and know yourself. Therefore, it is essential for leaders to be well informed and know the requirements—they will need to be able to use this knowledge to prompt colleagues, helping them interpret meanings, encourage conversations about policy and practice and ensure that all are involved in decisions about changes that affect them. They will need to support and guide colleagues through processes of reflection that may lead to changed practice.

- and modify practices
- Support continual development by ‘*snack learning*’ - educators receiving frequent, bite sized chunks of information



## Strategies to support the leadership role: . .

- Use delegation to foster a sense of ownership and responsibility and be open to new learning—leaders cannot do it alone
- Build supportive relationships, create a climate in which others experience a sense of belonging and provide ways for views and thoughts to be expressed
- Foster the belief that what they are doing is creating something different and important for children.
- Engage with educators, build a sense of enthusiasm and challenge about the changes
- Establish work teams and engage in ongoing cycles of inquiry that promote deep learning
- Encourage and support educators in reflective action—reflect on and learn from experiences, stand back, monitor

Leaders will need to be courageous—as this is needed to unglue patterns of behavior and ways of doing—in order to ensure the requirements of the national quality agenda are understood and successfully implemented into everyday practice.

