



The Early Years Model of Practice: Supporting Social Emotional Learning by “Being”

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Autism CRC Vision and Mission

Vision

Autistic people empowered to discover and use their diverse strengths and interests

Mission

To motivate, facilitate and translate collaborative autism research across the life-span, underpinned by inclusive practices

Autism CRC Research Programs





Autism & Education

- **96.7%** of students on the autism spectrum experience educational restrictions.
- **48%** of students on the spectrum are educated in 'special' classes or schools.

(ABS, 2015)



Students on the spectrum experience difficulties with:

- fitting in socially (**63.0%**)
- communication (**51.1%**)

(ABS, 2015)

The **social emotional needs** of students on the spectrum have the **greatest impact** and require the **highest levels** of support, assistance, adjustment, or accommodations.

(Saggers et al., 2016, p. 51)

Students on the spectrum have **social support needs** in the following areas:

- **social relationships**
- **social academics**
- **self-advocacy**
- **peer-related needs**

(Able et al., 2015, p. 41)



Teachers' Professional Learning Needs

Teachers want to know more about:

- the autism spectrum and students' individual characteristics,
- **accommodations for students' academic and social needs within inclusive classrooms**
- **facilitation of the general social needs** of students on the spectrum
- promotion of advocacy for students on the spectrum

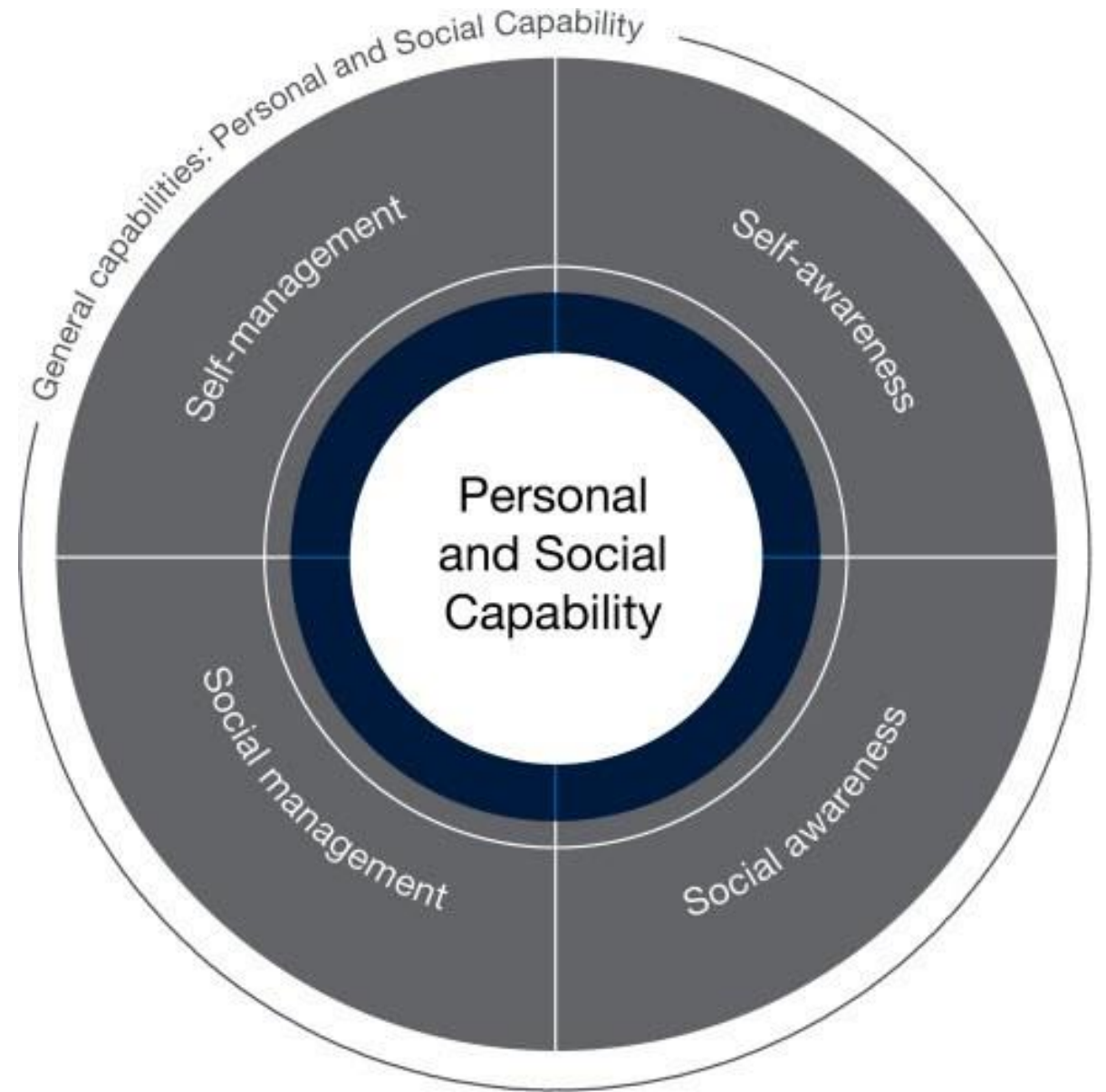
(Able et al., 2015, p. 50)



Personal & Social Capability

- Recognise emotions
- Express emotions appropriately
- Understand relationships
- Communicate effectively
- Work collaboratively
- Make decisions
- Negotiate and resolve conflict

(ACARA, 2018)



The Early Years Model of Practice (EY-MoP)

- The **EY-MoP** is a tool that supports teacher decision making and professional growth in relation to the inclusive and high quality education of students on the spectrum in the early years of schooling.
- The model comprises a set of educational practices aligned with the organisers of **Belonging**, **Being**, and **Becoming** from the *Early Years Learning Framework*.
- Practices support:
 - the adjustment of the physical, social-emotional, and behavioural aspects of the learning environment (**Belonging**),
 - **the development of social-emotional skills and a preventative approach to challenging behaviours (Being)**, and
 - the delivery of the Australian Curriculum, with a focus on communication, literacy, and numeracy (**Becoming**).

EY-MoP

Belonging

Practices relate to the adjustment of the physical, social-emotional, and behavioural aspects of the learning environment.

1. Interact with every student
2. Feedback on learning and behaviour
3. Active supervision of class
4. Accessible and organised classroom
5. Class layout for social interaction
6. Give clear directions
7. Reinforce rules and consequences
8. Consistently use routines
9. Consistently use schedules
10. Prepare students for transitions

Being

Practices relate to the development of social-emotional skills and a preventative approach to challenging behaviours.

1. **Engage with students**
2. **Model positive interactions**
3. **Friendship skill instruction**
4. **Model emotional literacy**
5. **Self-regulation instruction**
6. **Social problem solving instruction**
7. **Peer-Mediated Instruction**
8. **Conduct ABC analysis**
9. **Modify environs to reduce behaviour**

Becoming

Practices relate to the delivery of the Australian Curriculum, with a focus on communication, literacy, and numeracy.

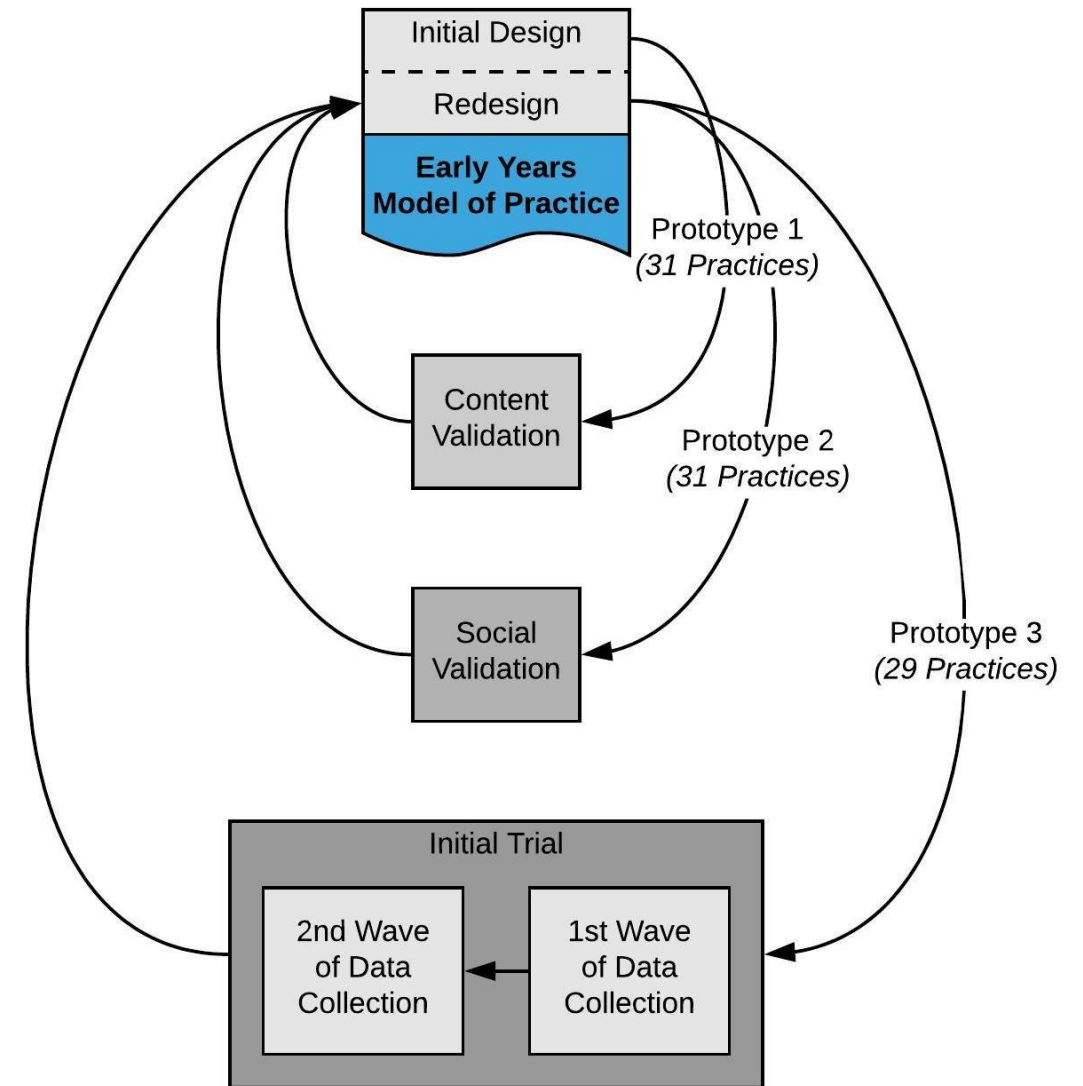
1. Assess student knowledge
2. Provide systematic instruction
3. Monitor student learning
4. Assess student learning
5. Self-help skill instruction
6. Communication instruction
7. Speaking and listening skills
8. Reading instruction
9. Writing instruction
10. Numeracy instruction

Development of the EY-MoP

A Model of Practice should:

- inspire teacher implementation and practice change,
- be grounded in authentic practice,
- be generic, and
- detail sequence and orchestration of learning activities.

(Falconer, Finlay, & Fincher, 2011)



Initial Design



Determination of Practices

- Identification of Practices
- Organisation of Practices
- Refinement of Practices
- Review of Practices

Trial of the EY-MoP

17 Prep/Kindergarten Teachers
from metropolitan NSW, QLD, and VIC

Tool + Expert Support
(5 Teachers)

2 x online surveys
2 x phone interviews

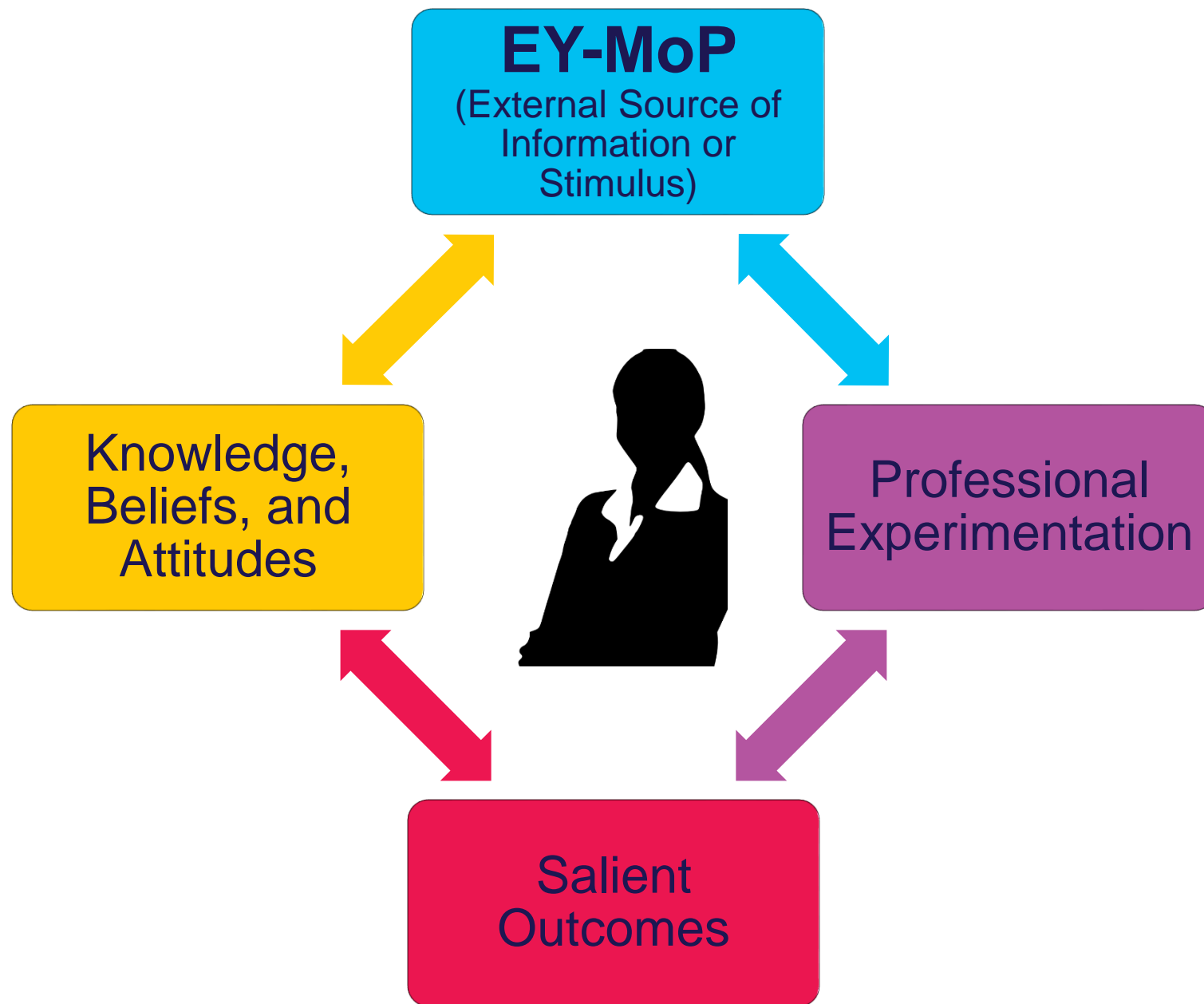
Tool
(12 Teachers)

2 x online surveys
2 x phone interviews

Vignette

- **Experienced teacher**
 - 14th year of teaching
 - 5th year teaching Prep
- 23 students (11 girls & 12 boys)
 - **2 students on the autism spectrum**
 - A student with muscular dystrophy
 - A student with complex and challenging behaviours
- A **range of student abilities** in terms of literacy and numeracy as well as **social skills**.





“ It's definitely **strengthened my own practice**, and it's **boosted my confidence** in catering for the needs of students on the spectrum.

QLD Prep Teacher



“

I would talk... about the *model as a tool to guide their planning, and their practice, and their reflection.*

QLD Prep Teacher

”



“

It's benefited the children,
it's benefited me, and I've
got a great resource that's
here, that's self-explanatory,
easy to read.

Victorian Prep Teacher

”



Questions?

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Australian Government
**Department of Industry,
Innovation and Science**

Business

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Centres Programme



AutismCRC

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