

Element 2: Principles, including Rights of the Child and Practitioner Image of the Child

Principles related to *Children and their lives in early childhood: Activities A-E*

Activity C: Exploring challenges in enabling children to show their competence and confidence

Part 1: Thinking about children's competence and confidence

At times, supporting children to show their confidence and competence in your setting can lead to challenges and concerns for adults. This activity invites you to look at a selection of photos of babies, toddlers and young children showing their growing competence and confidence.

Photos with music or Photos with no music.

Reflect on what you have seen and complete the table below.

Thinking about the photos

What words would you use to describe the children and their experiences in the photos?

**Could you see children in your setting partaking in these experiences?
If yes, why? If no, why not?**

After-activity notes

While we need to ensure babies, toddlers and young children are safe, we also need to trust them and to give them lots of opportunities to try new things for themselves and to assess risk. Sometimes doing this will take longer and might need lots of practice on the child's part and sometimes early on they will need support from you, for example, pouring drinks, serving food, climbing a low wall or tree, using scissors, making a challenging jigsaw but it's worth the time and effort. While it may be scary or frustrating for us as adults to stand back and observe, this is how children learn—through hands-on experiences. Remember, that is how we all learn. Think back to when you learned to drive, or bake your first cake, change a car tyre, play football or swim for the first time.

Next time a child you are working with wants to climb on a chair to add a block to the tower, butter their own bread with a knife, zip up their coat, use the camera, computer and printer to create

their own books or stories, or rearrange the furniture and equipment in the room to create a restaurant, doctor's surgery or post office, take a step back and watch. Try not to hover as this can make children anxious and less able to focus on what they are doing. As you become used to standing back and being nearby if the child needs you, you will see how competent babies, toddlers and young children can be, when given opportunities. Remember, being there if the child needs you is different to feeling you need to intervene to help the child!

Síolta and *Aistear* view children as confident, competent, curious and creative learners and so as a professional it's important that you support babies, toddlers and young children to be as competent and confident as they can be. You can do this by thinking about how you show your trust and belief in them even if you are anxious or reluctant! The next activity might be helpful in doing this.

Part 2: Challenges to enabling children to show their growing competence and confidence

This activity invites you to look at Learning Experience 20: I did it, I stood up, Learning Experience 64: Pilots are boys and Dinosaur Learning Experience

Reflect on what you have seen in the photo presentation, in the learning experiences and in your own practice whilst completing the table below.

Challenges and solutions

Challenges in enabling children to show their competence and confidence

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Solutions or responses to these challenges

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