

Practice Guideline on Child Development – Section 2

Pause and reflect on the concept of children’s autonomy

The [Practice Note on Play-Based Learning](#) (2018) and [Practice Note on Professional Supervision of Children](#) (2019) promote critical reflection about play and your responsibilities regarding participation, facilitation and supervision. They can help you articulate the value of play-based learning to colleagues, families and other professionals.

With colleagues, consider the concept of children’s autonomy within supervised environments. Read and collaboratively discuss the following short scenario and generate ideas of how to meet your professional responsibilities to keep children physically and psychologically safe, while encouraging them to take reasonable risks and develop friendships with peers. You can add your thoughts and reflections in the space below.

Children’s places: There is a delicate balance between supervising children and encouraging them to be independent. Children create experiences by exploring their environments and finding and making spaces, while also generating conversations with peers (e.g., negotiating, problem-solving and making decisions about games and activities). While it’s important to observe children’s play and engage in dialogue with them to support their learning, it’s also important for children to have time reserved for conversations and engagements that don’t directly involve the educator. When children are given opportunities to discover spaces and construct conversations with each other, their discussions are more authentic. They also learn to trust in their ability to construct languages and cultures situated within bonds with friends and the spaces they inhabit for play and discovery.