

Briefing paper; professional practitioner.

The purpose of this paper is to discuss the role of reflective practitioner, and why it is important within the early years, discuss the theory created by Schon and also include the theory of Gibbs and Kolb. How reflective practice can improve quality in early years and how it may support one and all of them the ability to develop as a professional. One is also going to look at linking the UNICEF articles into this briefing paper has it gives a brief understanding of why these roles are important.

Reflective practice is having the ability to be able to reflect on one's actions so as to engage in a process of continuous learning (Donald, Schon). Reflective practice was developed by so people like doctors, teachers etc can learn from real life experiences. A person would reflect by looking at the positives and negatives of their work, what can be amended to adjust this, whether something challenging has occurred and if a prevention could be put into place to make a challenging situation better for example if a child has not got the ability to participate in such task if it can be adjusted to their needs and capability.

Why is reflective practice important within the early years?

Reflective practice within the early years is important as it allows professionals to be able to be critical of their own work, and the ability to understand on how to improve their knowledge, skills and understanding. This enables a professional the ability to use different approaches in order to reach good practice. Reflective practice as highlighted by the EYFS, raises "the quality of the practice and the quality of practitioners".

(www.nurseryworld.co.uk).

"Reflection allows you to identify and appreciate positive experiences and better identify ways that can improve your practice and service delivery". <https://www.hcpc-uk.org/standards>.

Thinking analytically allows one to gain more insight into ways of developing and allows us to learn from mistakes that may often occur. Mistakes make us want to do better, when a weakness is found a person always wants to learn from it allowing them to become stronger and overcome these challenges that have risen as it enables one to have a clear understanding of what it is that exactly went wrong and what is achievable and how they may minimise it from happening again. However reflective thinking may have a positive outcome for some, others may focus more on the situation itself and how they found it challenging.

Reflection has many different forums; however, it is of great importance to understand that activities closely linked to reflection may not themselves be reflective. Reflecting is not purely talking, meeting with team members, supervisors, managers or writing about your day-to-day findings but if these activities become reflective if used as an analytical approach to enhance one's insights to develop a better work practice. Having the ability to reflect will have a positive impact for both the professional practitioner and those who they work with.

Unfamiliar situations make us want to learn, make us more adaptable for future activities. Children that think differently from one another and have different abilities' understanding these will enable one to make better activity choices which will allow children of all capabilities to be able to learn from. Referring to the UNICEF article 12 (respect for the views of the child). It states that every child has the rights to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them. By allowing them the opportunity to reflect with the practitioner it enables them a clear insight of understanding their own potential however not all children are able to understand this and need to be adhere to their own personnel capabilities. "Although the early years workforce is becoming adept at the process of observing children" (www.nurseryworld) some practitioners are yet to fully engage and often are not evaluating their own work.

Discuss the theory (Schon) and some reflective models e.g., Gibbs, Driscoll, Kolb.

For this next part of the briefing paper, one will look at Schon theory and the reflective models by Kolb, Gibbs, and Driscoll.

The Schon reflective model (1991) is built up of two model types of reflection, one type reflects while participating in the activity, while the other is conducted after the activity or event has taken place. It has been suggested in the libguides.hull.ac.uk article that Schon model is "particularly useful in practical situations, such as when teaching or nursing, where you may need to think on your feet and try new things when something is not going as you would expect". Schon's framework is a great example of reflective practice.

Now one will take a brief look into Kolby's theory, David Kolby discovered his learning model in 1984 also known as the abbreviation ERA. Kolb's experimental theory is a four-stage cycle, 1 concrete experience; - the learner is believed to encounter a concrete experience. 2. Reflective observation or the new experience; - the learner reflects on this new experience comparing it to their current knowledge. 3 Abstract conceptualization; - a person learns from their new experiences. 4 Active Experimentation; - the learner is able to apply what they have learnt creating new ideas.

Kolb (1984) conducts his theory on integrated process with each stage making sure that they are equally supportive of the other. Although the disadvantage of this theory is the learner can only achieve success if all four theories are conducted as without one another they are not as effective.

One has also chosen to look at the Gibbs reflective cycle for this briefing paper, Gibbs reflective cycle was developed by Graham Gibbs in 1988 to give structure to the learning process from experiences.

Gibbs examines 6 stages: -

Description of the experience feelings and thoughts.

Evaluation; - of the positive and negative.

Analysis in order to gain understanding of the situation.

Conclusion: - what this experience has taught one and whether this can be developed differently.

Action plan: - understanding what approach to take in the future for similar tasks.

The model enables a person the ability to look upon the questions and allow them to refer to these enhancing them to create a better experience allowing them to learn from their own personnel feelings.

These different models have slightly different views to one another but are all as important when it comes to the role of the practitioner, one feels that looking at these allows one the opportunity to understand the importance of following theories or models when it comes to working within a practitioner role. You could argue that one is more important than the other but in fact if these three had not developed over the years, then a practitioner truly would not know have to reflect or have an understanding of the importance of doing so. Having different ideas is extremely important as it shows you there is all different ways of learning approach. This enables the practitioner to discover the outcome and learn if any changes need to take place.

The Driscoll model of reflection was created by John Driscoll, in 1994, 2004 and 2007. Driscoll's model of reflection theory is one of the most basic he studied. "The three stem questions" it is believed that these were initially introduced by Terry Boston during 1970. These three questions are 1. What? 2. So what? 3. Now what? Driscoll created a link with these stem questions by producing a learning cycle. By using these three steps of cycle it allows an analysis of the approaches learnt. It has been suggested that this is a simplistic model and believed to be used by many as it is more simplistic to understand and follow the 3 steps of model cycle. "The three-stage cycle is easier to remember when compared to other models and more straightforward in nature". (Driscoll)

Discuss how reflective practice can improve quality in early years.

Reflective practice improves the quality in early years as it enables the practitioner the ability to understand how those you work with learn from you. A practitioner reflecting on their work will be able to find the positives and negatives to their own work approach, giving them an insight to understand what they can do to make them overcome any obstacles. Allowing all children, the ability to participate and create a learning process for all. It enables the practitioner to grow allowing them the ability to discover new methods of learning this allows a person to be able to enhance their problem-solving abilities. Creating new and exciting learning opportunities. It allows children the ability to face and overcome new challenges, knowing that they can feel safe in doing so it allows them to build confidence skills which will boost their ego and willingness to learn, children knowing that they're not the only ones learning from this opportunity can often thrive from the challenge. This links to the UNICEF article 28 (right to education). Every child has the right to an education. Education should be free to every child enabling them the ability to be able to grow, developing their personality, talents, abilities to full. (Article 29 goals of education). "Reflective practice will support you to maintain and continually improve. The process will also benefit parents and careers, as they will be able to see changes in your practice and feel confident that the care you are providing is high quality and constantly improving". (<https://www.pacey.org.uk>)

Discuss how it can support you to develop as a professional?

Reflective practice encourages engagement, it allows one the ability to look at their choices that they have made whether these can be developed on. What decisions you have made and why you have made such decision. Giving one a better understanding of their children's abilities and those who they work with too. Understanding if they did face

challenges is so what were the challenges that have risen? And what it is to prevent these obstacles from arising and affecting their learning abilities. Not all children are the same they have different abilities some can find an activity easy and get bored quickly, where others may find the whole process overwhelming and difficult, being a good practitioner, one will understand the importance of being able to set challenges around all. Allowing all children to feel confident and giving them all the ability to engage in activities creates a whole new fun way of the learning process that may lead to skills they can use later on in life. Most practitioners love to reflect as it allows them to not only challenge the child but also themselves, by planning various activities it enables them to set targets for the young people they work with allowing them to be able to rely on these in situations to have proof of the child's capabilities for example of a practitioner work as an additional need support worker the all able to create targets that the child should be working towards allowing them and other agencies to understand where the child is at, it gives a clear identification of what steps they may need to approach in order to help the child reach their full potential, not having this the child can often get lost in the system or not given the support they truly need this is failing the child and neglect their educational needs. (Article 23) states children with a disability have the right to a decent life. Article 28 stated a right to education every child has rights. Article 29 sets goals of education every child is entitled to be educated and have the ability to learn regardless of their abilities. Understanding the importance of observational planning is key element of a child's learning process it allows enables the parent to understand what key stages their child is at working.

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