

What Is reflective Practice?

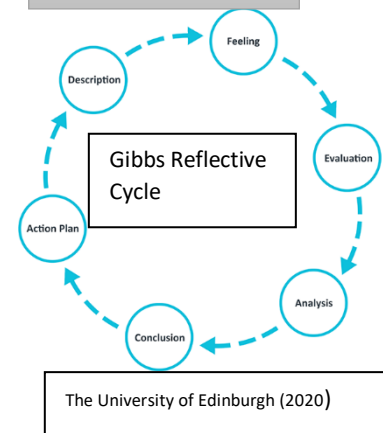
This paper is a brief overview on the importance of reflective practice to support the development of professionals in early years settings. UWTSD (2022)

Reflective practice is to think about or reflect about something. Its about learning from experiences. It's a skill which can be learned or developed. Skills you need (2011-2022)

Reflection and reflective practice have vital roles in professionalism, and it needs to have a purpose or meaning. Its an ongoing process in a professional practitioner thought life experiences, training, personal and professional development. Reflection can be a shared process, or an individual process. Sharing thoughts and communicating can be beneficial in reflective practice as shared reflection can be with a colleague, mentor, or supervisor. Often reflective practice is modelled by a mentor or supervisor in the work setting. Brock (2015)

University of Cambridge (no date) states that Reflective practice means to think about our experiences and to learn from them to help us in the future. It's about learning from our experiences and how we can develop to support us in the future. When we reflect it helps us to step back at look at things as a whole, it can help to see what has been achieve or what needs improving. It can help you to see how you can progress or develop as a practitioner.it can be beneficial at encouraging new and fresh ideas or looking and thinking what works well and what could do with adapting. A beneficial way of reflecting is asking yourself questions and keeping a journal and then sharing with a mentor to develop even further. Reflection can be both positive and negative but its vital to make the time in order to reflect.

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Donald Schon's Theories

Study Prism (2022) states that Schon's theory talks about improvisation, or thinking on the spot, this theory was founded from an enjoyment of music, he believes that a person's life experiences should be integrated in amongst work. His theory incorporated a number of concepts, the first being Knowing in action, this is a person's ability to undergo tasks without prior thinking, this involves things that are done out of habit. Schon's next concept looks at reflection in action and reflection on action. Reflection on action refers to go away and reflect on an event or situation, to look back at what happened. Reflection in action refers to a reflection when undertaking a task or event, referring to your knowledge and experience to use it at the present time and can help to make quick decisions. Sometimes you can reflect in action so make decision in the moment but then also reflect on the action about what you did and how you could do it differently next time. So, you are reflecting the action and then on the action that happened. Another concept with Schon's theory is double loop learning, this is where someone will test and assess and question the situation to achieve the best outcome. This is considered '*thinking outside the box*'. Alongside Schon's theory there are models of reflection which can support practitioners in their reflective Practice.

Gibbs Reflective Cycle

According to the university of Edinburgh (2020) Gibbs reflective cycle was formed to support the learning from experience theory. Gibbs cycle offers a framework, which allows learnings from experiences as well as planning from experience that went positively or negatively. The cycle can support someone through a situation that happens regularly or a one-off situation. In Gibbs cycle there are 6 different stages. The first one is Description; this gives a practitioner the chance to explore and describe what's happened in a situation in depth. The second step in the cycle is feelings, this gives an opportunity to look at the feelings and emotions during the situation and how the feeling may have had an impact on the scenario, also gives a chance for others to express their feelings. The third step is evaluation, this is where it gives someone the chance to assess what went well and what can be improved in that situation. The fourth step is analysis, this step gives people the chance to look for meaning and understanding on the situation, looking at what went well what was positive and why, also looking at what didn't go well what were the negatives and why. The fifth step is the conclusion, this is where you conclude all of your findings, like what you have learnt, how can it be better next time. The sixth and final step is the action plan, this is how you would act differently next time, it may become prior knowledge, but its about knowing what skills you may need, and have they been developed from last time.

Driscoll's Model of Reflection

Janse, B (2020) states that Driscoll's model of reflection was developed as a guide to reflection, there are 3 different steps in his cycle which are, What?, So what? And Now What? And there is question which go with each step of the cycle. Driscoll's model is considered to be the easiest forms of reflection. By going through the questions it starts to assess the situation. First, we start with what? This is the first step of the structure, its where you explain in detail what has happened, how did you act, did you act alone, and was it a positive or negative experience. The second step of the structure is So What? This is there you look at feelings, so how did the situation make you feel, how did you respond and why. Has your view changed since the situation occurred? also it looks at has a previous situation effected or influenced your views and actions on this situation. Lastly the third step is Now What? This is where it looks at looking back at the situation and moving forward, so what went well and what could be improved, how could you improve, what could be dome differently, what will be the next focus for the future. This method can be a way of solving problems and assessing what is or isn't working and how can we work towards better practice. It also helps to focus in more depth about the work we undertake, and it also improves communication and an opportunity to share and learn from others.

Reflective Practice in Early years settings and How it supports development of a professional

The term practitioner refers to many aspects of the early years settings and refers to multiple different roles. Hallet (2008)

Being a practitioner in an early year's setting is different now compared to years ago, many practitioners have more of a responsibility in a child's progression, learning and development. This increases the focus on communication amongst other things. Reflective learning on work-based experiences supports a practitioner in becoming reflective. Hallet, E. (2013)

Early years practitioner's role as developed as we see more of a responsibility held by them and with more involvement with not only the children but also their support networks like families and other professionals related to early years. Where once practitioners were possibly supporting the teacher in daily jobs, its very much shifted to where practitioner are now very much supporting children and developing their learning and play a vital role in possibly assisting with planning and communicating specific needs in a child's development. The variety or early years roles can strengthen the development of a child with be equipped to meeting child focused needs. Hallet, E. (2013)

The early years area is constantly developing and changing, and practitioners are constantly evolving with the changes and need to keep up. This is where being a reflective practitioner come in, when new policies come into place practitioners need to adapt to keep informed and implement changes, reflection is an important aspect here. Hallet, E. (2013)

"The Purpose of reflective practice is to provide better quality experiences for children and their families" Brookfield (1995)

Early years Practitioners use their prior knowledge, understanding and experience to help develop and implement new and changing polices into their work practice, this is done using reflection, by adapting, transforming and building on their prior provision. As well as their understanding and communication with children and their families. As well as their own personal and professional development. Reflection offers practitioners the ability to assess and challenge the method of working, this can be reached through communicating with others, thinking about theory, policies and practice. Reflection can be using pre existing knowledge and new information to go about shaping new ideas and methods of working. Hallet, E. (2013)

Being a reflective practitioner you develop attributes, such as close relationships with children and families and work colleagues, as well as explore, problem solve, discover solutions, communicate ideas and feedback. Also to share with others, expand knowledge and improve practice. This is highlighted in the REFLECT framework. Hallet, E (2013)

Kelly (2015) states Reflective practice can improve quality of early years settings as by being reflective practitioners we can observing, planning, questioning, not settling, pushing to improve and challenge children, helping them develop, sharing and contributing new ideas. A way to help reflection can be to keep a diary, this is where a reflective model ties in, as you can use the cycle to answer the questions in a diary. The process can help improve child's development, but also improves practitioners making them more prepared and structured.

Conclusion

To conclude and summarise this briefing paper we can see that reflective practices plays and important part in professional roles and that our reflection must have purpose and meaning. Brock, A. (2015)

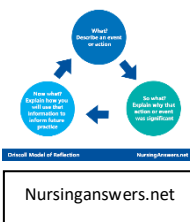
When we as professional practitioners reflect, we think back to different experiences and scenarios that have happened and how we have used them to adapt and develop the future reflection supports our progression as practitioners and keeps us questioning and developing. University of Cambridge (no date)

Donald Schon's theories sates that life experiences can form professionalism and hoe we can develop and reflect by reflecting in action and reflecting on action as well as it having a concept of thinking outside the box. Study prism (2022)

To develop our reflection we have Gibbs reflective cycle and Driscoll's model of reflection as practitioners we can use these to support us through different experiences and situations. The university of Edinburgh states Gibbs cycle can support practitioners through reflection with 6 steps, by focusing in-depth on what has happened, the feelings and the evaluation and finding meaning to then work to a future plan of improving.

Jayne, B. (2020) states that Driscoll's model of refection makes practitioners problem solvers, and supports our communication and opportunities to learn off each other.

And Kelly (2015) shows that reflective practice can support early years practitioners in using their knowledge and skills to improve and challenge a child's development, as well as improving us as practitioners.



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