



Information Sheet

Establishing a Vision and Mission statement

The vision statement for an Early Years Network outlines what the group ultimately hopes to achieve. A clear vision will reflect the core values of the membership and the aspirations for children and families in the local community. The vision statement will guide the decisions and actions of the Early Years Network and support the group when determining its long-term focus.

Vision and mission statements serve two distinct functions.

The **vision** captures how the network wants to change the community in the long term.

The **mission** is about the network's purpose and how they will make the change happen in the community.

Compare these sample statements of an Early Years Network's vision and mission:

'Vision – In our community every child has the opportunity to reach their full potential.'

The focus in this vision statement is on the result of the Early Years Network's work. It is future-focused and outlines the ultimate outcome the network wishes to achieve.

'Mission – The Early Years Network will provide opportunities for children to be actively engaged in learning opportunities throughout their community.'

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The focus in this mission statement is on the Early Years Network's purpose and role in delivering the vision and what it will do to help bring about this outcome. It presents and outlines how and what they will do to achieve their vision.

In developing a vision, the Network can consider the bigger picture and imagine what they wish to achieve in the next three to five years. It is useful to consider:

- What would be different in the community if the change occurred?
- How would the lives of the children and families in the community have changed if the change occurred?
- What would children and families in the community say about living in this community if the change occurred?

A good vision inspires, focuses on serving the community and is ambitious. A good vision statement is short (2-3 sentences), memorable and can be easily understood.

To establish a mission statement, it can be helpful to work through the following steps with your Early Years Network.

- **Step 1:** What are the areas where your Network could improve outcomes in your community?
(Example: literacy outcomes.)
 - Who is affected by the issue?
 - How would the community benefit, be different or change if your Network improved outcomes?
- **Step 2:** What activities or programs can your Network undertake to improve outcomes?
(Example: Providing opportunities for children to read.)
- **Step 3:** Who is your target group within your community?
(Example: Children up to eight years and their families.)
- **Step 4:** What are your geographic boundaries?
(Example: Local government boundaries.)

How can we achieve this?

Does your mission explain to the community what the Network will do?

Is it clear and simple?

Will the Mission focus the Network?

Does the Mission align well with the Vision?

Does the Mission explain how the Network will achieve the Vision?

More information

To find out more about Early Years Networks, please visit our website or contact:

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