

Using Reflection to Nurture Relationships with Children, Families, and Staff

Reflection helps everybody.

Reflection is thinking carefully about something to understand it, learn from it, and make better choices. It helps you, and the children and families you serve, by creating:



More emotional control:

You are better able to stay calm and centered — even when there are challenging behaviors or stressful situations.



Deeper understanding:

You are aware of what children are feeling, so you can respond with empathy instead of reacting in the moment.



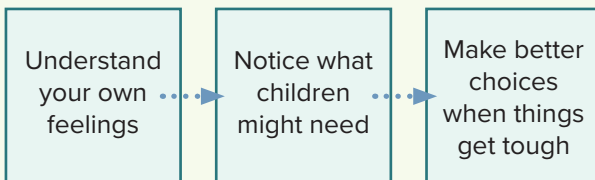
Stronger relationships:

When adults slow down, reflect, and respond with care, children feel safer and more connected.

What is reflective practice?

Reflective practice helps strengthen the ability to reflect. It involves thinking about how you act, feel, and react. It is especially helpful for people working with children.

Reflective practice helps you:



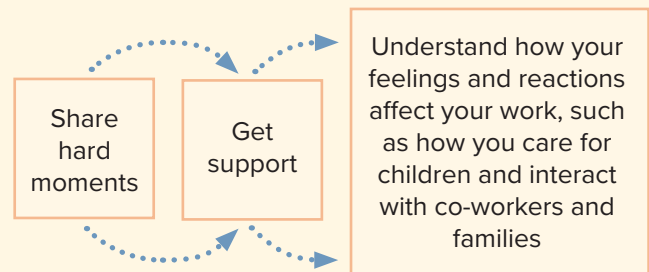
Three steps of reflective practice

- 1. Internal — Check in with yourself:**
 - “How am I feeling right now?”
 - “Did I stay calm?”
- 2. External — Notice others:**
 - “How is this child feeling?”
 - “What might be happening for them?”
- 3. Interactive — Take action:**
 - Talk with teammates or supervisors.
 - Think about how to respond.
 - Learn from what worked (and what didn’t).

Reflective supervision

Reflective supervision involves talking with a supervisor or peer about your work with children. It helps increase self-awareness and self-reflection. In the same way that staff support children, adults can support one another, offering respect, safety, trust, and chances for positive change.

Reflective supervision offers a safe space to:



Three keys to reflective supervision

- 1. Reflection:** Think about what’s happening.
- 2. Collaboration:** Work together.
- 3. Regularity:** Do it often and consistently.