

# HOW CAN PLAY-BASED LEARNING SUPPORT LEARNING TODAY AND IN THE FUTURE?



# Focus for Learning Together

## AGENDA



Holmestrand  
kommune

### Beginning With:

What Do We Know About Play-based Learning? How do we Know?

### Then We Will Be Thinking Together About:

- Engaging in Professional Collaborative Inquiry to Build on our Collective Thinking and Learning
- What is Professional Collaborative Inquiry?
- How Can Collaborative Inquiry Build on Norway's Vision and Strategy for:
  - Play-based Learning
  - Well-Being and Life Skills (Global Competencies), Language Skills and Digital Skills
  - Why and How is PCI a Process to More Deeply Understand Both Children's and Professional Learning?
- Using Pedagogical Walks During PCI for:
  - Learning more about Well-Being and Life Skills (Global Competencies), Language Skills and Digital Skills

# Process for Our Learning Together

## Materials include:

- global research;
- priorities and strategies for Holmestrand;
- Kindergarten photos and videos;
- collective questions and thinking for documentation and discussion;
- break out rooms with your local groups for revisiting during and after our session;
- chat pods
- Scenarios for discussion in break out rooms



# Beginning Our Learning Together





# What is Current Thinking About Play-based Learning?

*We Know That:*

**Play is Fueled by Curiosity**

- What is the impact of placing children's thinking with open-ended materials?



# What is Current Thinking About Play-based Learning?

*We Know That:*

## Play Builds Brains

- Neural pathways for problem solving, language and thinking skills influenced and advanced in play

*(CMEC 2012)*

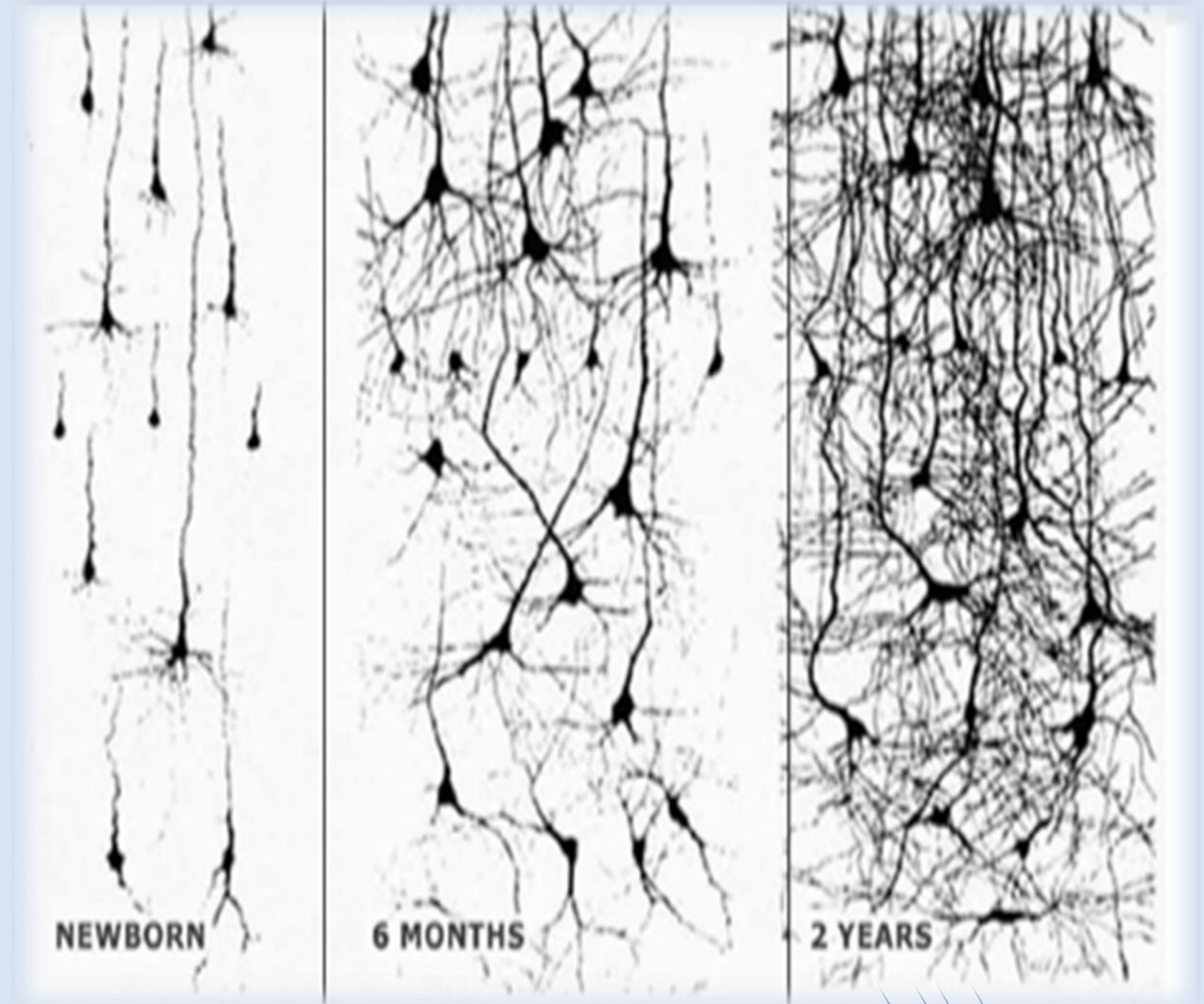


# How do we know? Let's look inside the brain...

## In the 1<sup>st</sup> 1000 days

- seeing, hearing, smelling and tasting pathways to make sense of the world
- babbling to using real words, from gazing into the distance to eye contact, from moving their fingers to pointing and waving

[https://earlyyearsstudy.ca/report\\_chapters/chapter-1-highlights/](https://earlyyearsstudy.ca/report_chapters/chapter-1-highlights/)



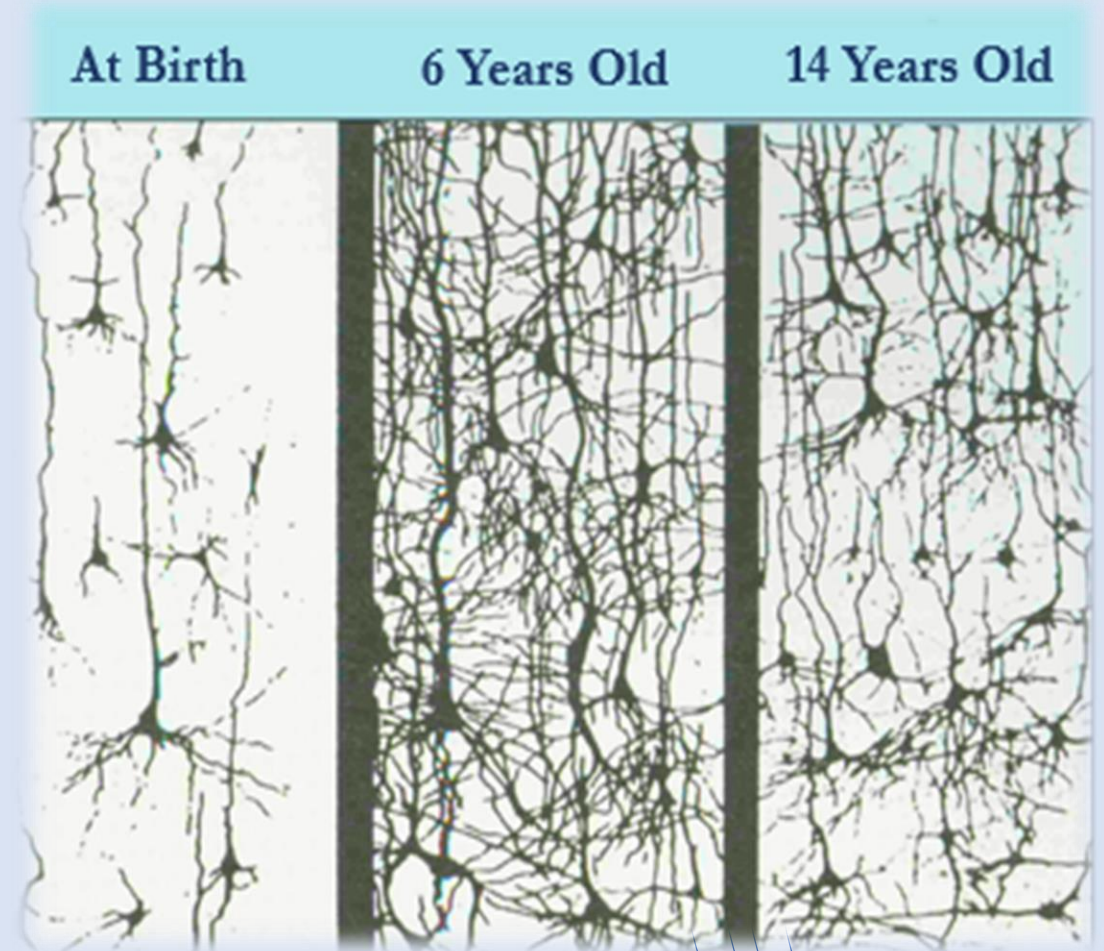


# Synaptic Density

## In the Second 1000 days (ages 2 to 5)

- At age 2, the wiring of neural pathways in a child's brain is expanding and becoming more intricate.
- By age 5, the brain's neural networks are even more elaborate and interconnected.
- Connections between the mid-brain and front of the brain support children's growing **abilities to plan, make decisions, pretend, explore ideas, and get along with others.**
- The preschool brain establishes the **foundation for reading, mathematics, science, and creative arts.** It sets children up to be learners for life.

[https://earlyyearsstudy.ca/report\\_chapters/chapter-1-highlights/](https://earlyyearsstudy.ca/report_chapters/chapter-1-highlights/)



# How do we know? Let's look inside the brain...

**"Play  
is the  
highest  
form of  
research."**

*Albert Einstein*



## Play Develops Human Capacity

- Play is considered so essential to healthy development that the United Nations has recognized it as a specific right for all children.

(CMEC 2012)

# How do we know? Research says...

## Play Develops Human Capacity

Research demonstrates that play-based learning leads to greater **social, emotional, and academic success.**

Play is a sustainable pedagogy for the future that **does not separate play from learning** but brings them together to **promote creativity in future generations.**

*(CMEC 2012)*





# How do we know? Data says...



Norway – ranks high #3 – lower suicide, obesity, good academic skills, confident of ability to make friends, someone to count on in times of trouble.

- Boys have a better body image than girls
- Norwegian pupils do not feel involved in decision-making at school
- Poverty and immigration can be equity & digital dividers
- Pupils concerned with environmental issues & climate change
- Increase in anxiety and depression

“Children who have a strong sense of belonging to school have higher academic achievement.”

UNICEF Well-Being, Innocenti Report Card #16, 2020 – Exacerbated by COVID-19  
(Section3)

Freedman, Riehl, Tylee and Wilson 2020

# What Do We Know?



Digital Networks and Technology allow us to 'capture' learning in order to revisit and study together as professionals and with children.



# How Can We Build On Norway's Good Results?



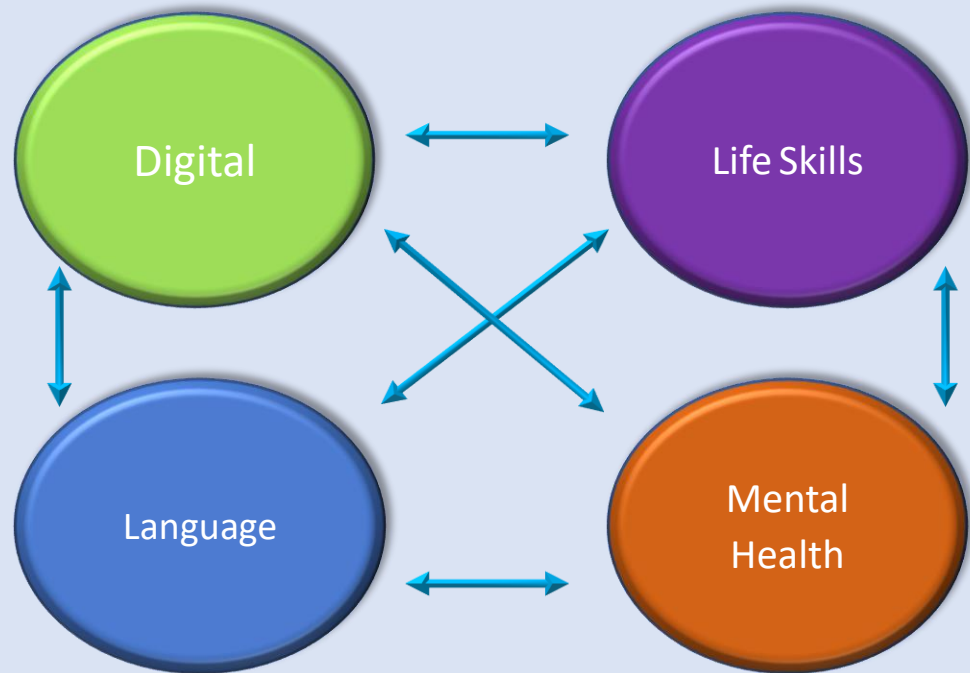
Holmestrand  
kommune

## Strategic Vision

Discuss in your group and create a list of words based on the following prompt:

*Learning in play includes...*

Document your group's thinking in the chat box.



# So What Does *What* We Know About *Play* Mean for our Practice...?

## Letting Go

A historical understanding of children as “sponge like” and egosentrisk

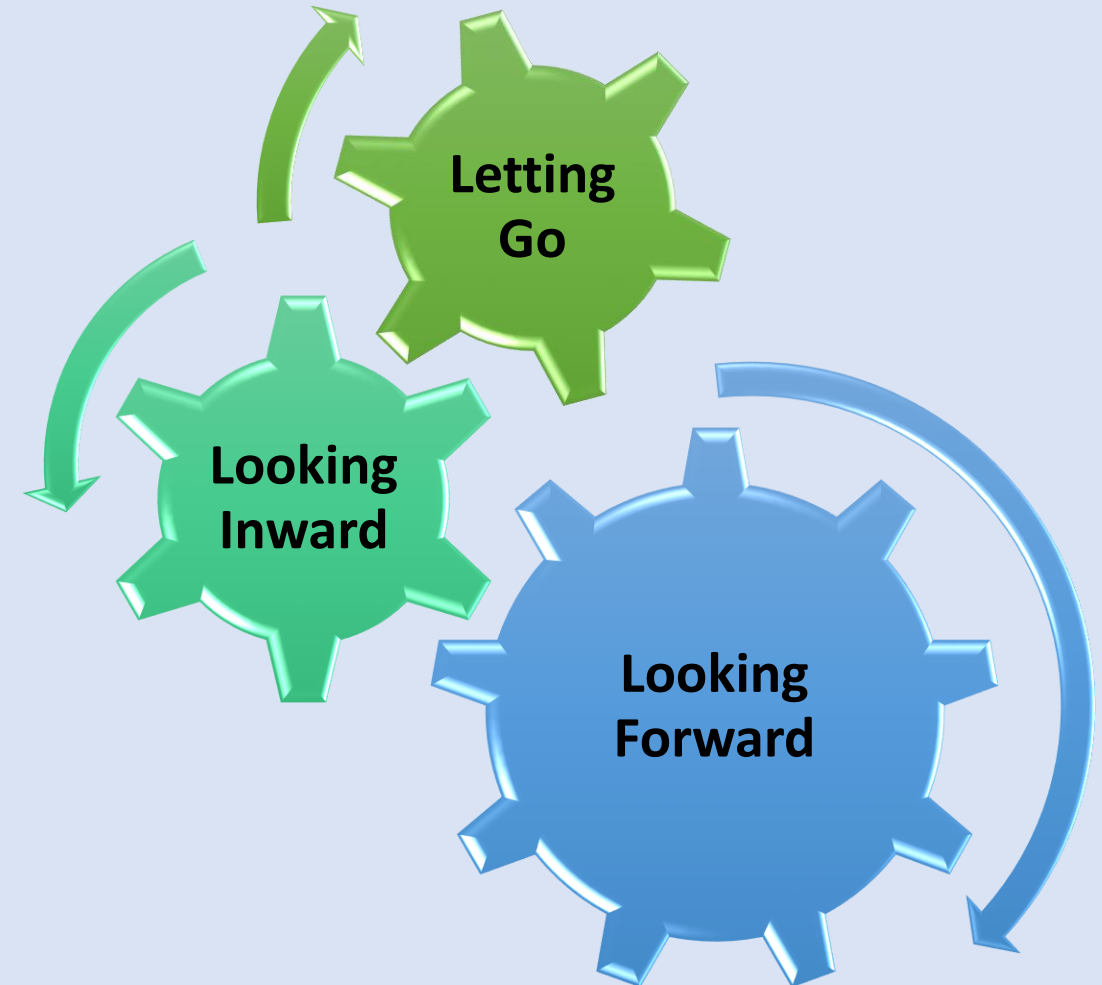
**And moving** Til et syn på barn som langt mer kompetente, nysgjerrige og i stand til kompleks tenkning

## Looking Inward

Studying how and what children learn in play

## Looking Forward

How play supports children’s learning and well-being required now and for their future

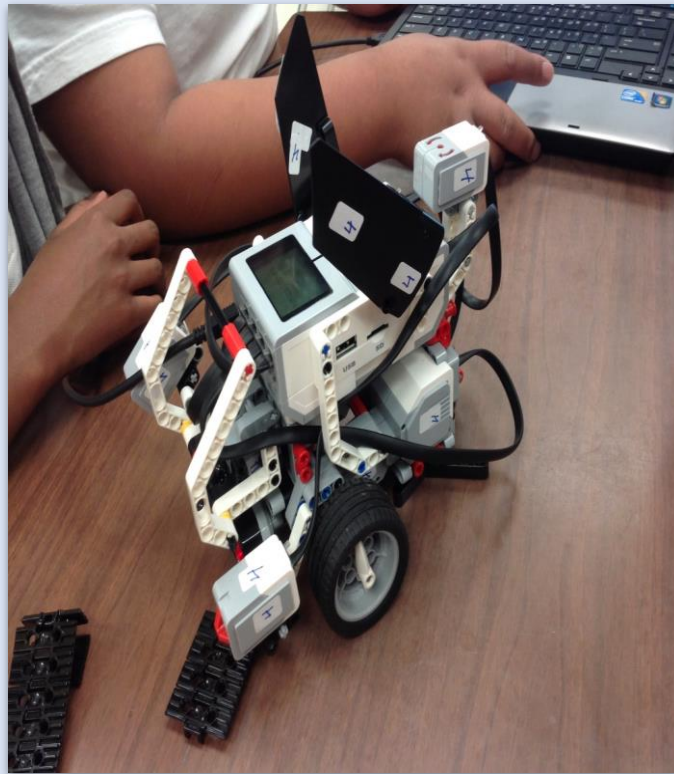




# We Know **Play** Is Learning



Play with 3-year-old child



Play with 13-year-old pupil



Play with 33-year-old adults

If we believe learning happens in play and because of play, how can we improve our capacity to notice, name and make learning more visible?

# Thinking Together: Engaging in a Professional Collaborative Inquiry to Build on our Collective Thinking and Learning



How can we improve our capacity to notice, name and make learning more visible?



# What is Collaborative Inquiry?



It is an ongoing process in which educators work collaboratively in cycles of curiosity, collective inquiry, action and reflection to achieve better outcomes for children.

*Leading Learning for Today and the Future*, on page 6 outlines 'The What' of Professional Collaborative Inquiry

# Strategic Plan for Professional Learning



Holmestrand  
kommune

En profesjon er folk med samme yrke som har disse kjennetegnene: De har spesialkunnskap og –ferdigheter med eget fagspråk, og de har felles standarder for praktisering av yrket inkludert en etisk yrkesstandard. De har i stor grad frihet til å ta skjønnsbaserte beslutninger. **De samarbeider med kollegaer for å løse komplekse problemer, og de er opptatt av kontinuerlig læring og faglig oppdatering.** (oversatt fra Hargreaves og Fullan. Professional Capital)

<https://holmestrand.kommune.no/trygghet-mestring-og-laring-for-alle/profesjonsutvikling-og-kompetanse-i-barnehager-og-skoler/>



PLAN

# What is Professional Collaborative Inquiry

Professional Collaborative Inquiry is an impactful process that:

- 1) investigates what should remain from education's past practices and why
- 2) investigates if **what** and **how** we are currently learning makes a difference for teacher and pupil learning
- 3) investigates how learning that is impactful in the present could make sense for an unknown future

Professional Collaborative Inquiry is by its very nature **adaptive, flexible** and **invites new ideas.**



# Strategi for inkluderende oppvekst i Holmestrand barnehage-grunnskole-sfo-voksenopplæring

Planen utarbeides 2019-2020 og innføres med virkning fra august 2020. I prosessen har alle nivå i organisasjon medvirket; ansatte i barnehage, sfo, skoler og voksenopplæringen. Ledere på alle nivå. Politisk behandling våren 2020.

Planen gjelder 0-16 år, skal sikre god overgang til vgo og livslang læring.

Helhet og  
sammenheng



Digital kompetanse  
Språklig kompetanse  
Livsmestringskompetanse

Digital kompetanse  
Språklig kompetanse  
Livsmestringskompetanse

Digital kompetanse  
Språklig kompetanse  
Livsmestringskompetanse

Kompetanseplan  
for Holmestrand  
barnehager

Desentralisert ordning  
Digitalisering og dybdelæring – Holmestrand  
(videreføres i ny kommune)  
Tidlig innsats – tilpasset opplæring –  
Spesialundervisning – Sande kommune  
(avsluttes høst 2019)

Rammeplan

Fagfornyelsen

Overordnet del  
Læreplaner

Norskopplæring  
Grunnskoleopplæring  
Spesialundervisning

Barnehage

Grunnskole m/sfo

Voksenopplæring

# Engaging in Professional Collaborative Inquiry

**Talk , Listen  
Learn As a  
Result of Our  
Walk**

- What was the impact of our action on learning?

**Making  
Sense to  
Refine &  
Learn**

**Assessing  
to Plan**

- What are we curious about?
- Where are we in our professional learning?

**Talk , Listen  
Learn Before  
We Walk**

**Talk , Listen  
Learn After  
We Walk**

- We describe without judgments our Pedagogical Walk?
- What do we think about what we saw and heard? How will we act on what we saw and heard?

**Acting to  
Make  
Sense**

**Planning  
to Act**

- Pedagogical Walk  
What are we seeing and hearing?

**Talk , Listen  
Learn While  
We Walk**





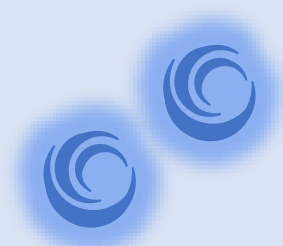
# Beginning Our Professional Inquiry



Curious about what children are thinking?

- What are we curious about?

**Assessing  
to Plan**





# Engaging in a PCI: Our Professional Curiosity Focus Today...



If Play is Learning....

Then how do *Pedagogical Walkthroughs* provide insights into what and how children are thinking? ...

So that educators can respond and plan for learning

- What are your Professional Curiosities?
- Take five minutes to talk together. Revisit your list of what play includes.
- Document your questions about *Play-based Learning*.
- Please write your questions into the chat box.

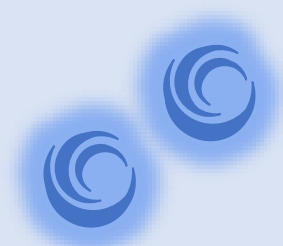
# Next in Our Professional Inquiry



Talk , Listen Learn before we go on  
our Pedagogical Walk

- Where are we in our professional learning?

**Assessing  
to Plan**



# In this phase of the Professional Collaborative Inquiry we...

- Raise professional curiosities-questions which we don't already know the answer to;
- Build and Stretch our thinking;
- Talk, Listen, Learn;
- Begin to develop our Professional Inquiry Question (Focus)





# Building our Learning About Play-Based Learning

“Learning in play is a **highly complex** and **intellectual process** that requires careful, planned and intentional observation, interpretation and analysis.

This **requires educators to have and continue to acquire an extensive knowledge base** of how learning happens in play, how different children develop in play, how concepts are revealed and the **critical role of the adult in making the learning visible.**”

(Adapted from Trawick-Smith & Dziurgot, 2010)



# Building our Professional Learning About: How Play-based Learning Supports Well-Being

## Learning and Well-Being are Interconnected

Barns behov for trygghet og omsorg må ikke sees på som et konkurrerende behov for læring i den pedagogiske prosessen - tvert imot. Betydningen av relasjoner for barns evne til å lære og utvikle seg i de tidlige barndomsårene er helt avgjørende

<https://holmestrand.kommune.no/trygghet-mestring-og-laring-for-alle/handlingsplan-for-kommunale-barnehager-2020-2021/>



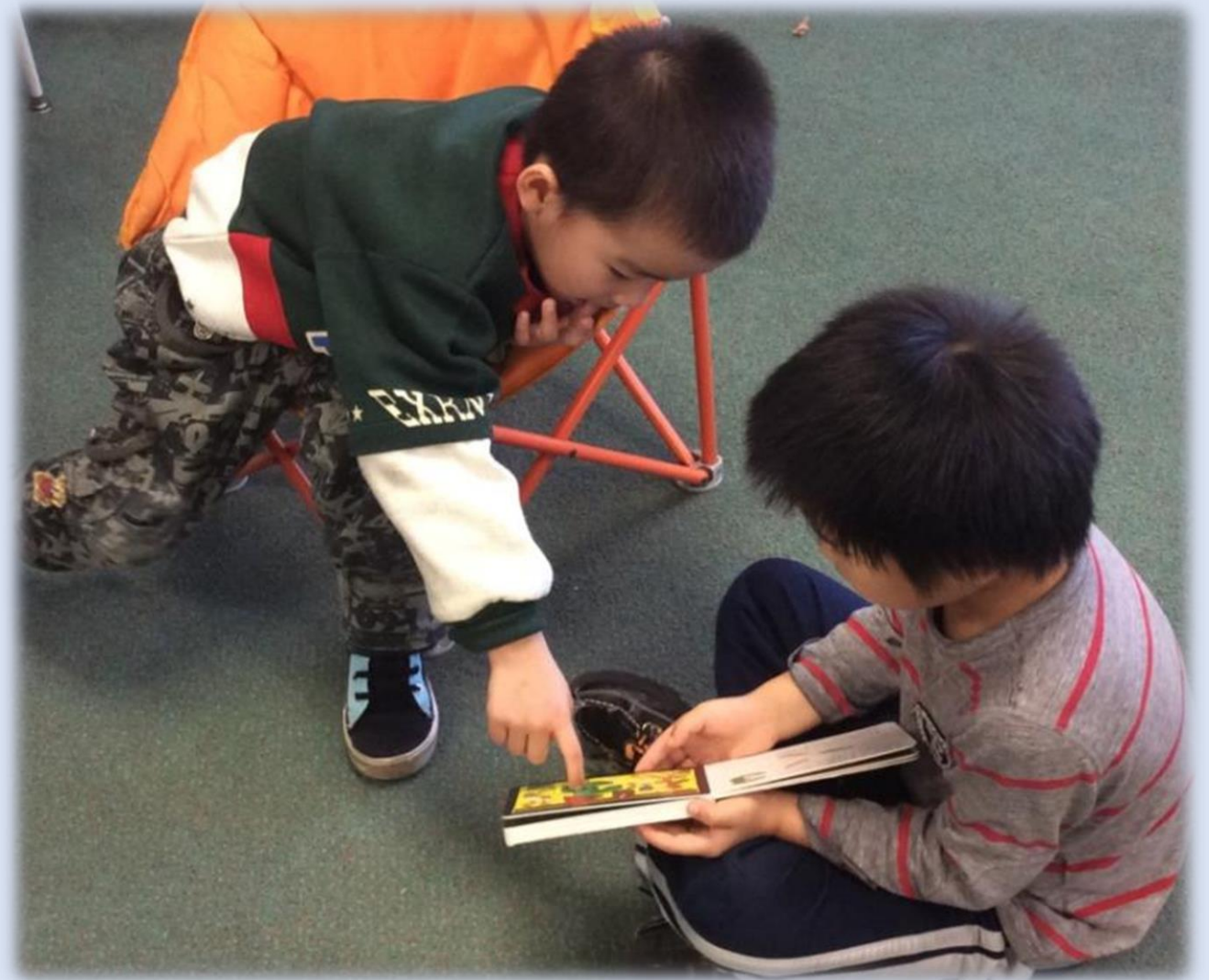
# What are We Learning About How Play-based Learning Supports Well-Being?

## Belonging and Contributing Matters:

What we're learning is that social interaction – the building of the brain through relationships – is an absolutely crucial, essential part of healthy development.

Relationships are nutrients for the brain.

(Clinton, 2013b, video transcript, opening statement)





# What are We Learning About How Play-based Learning Supports Well-Being?

## Student Choice and Voice Matters:

When children co-construct the environment, we/they learn about who they are as learners and how they learn.

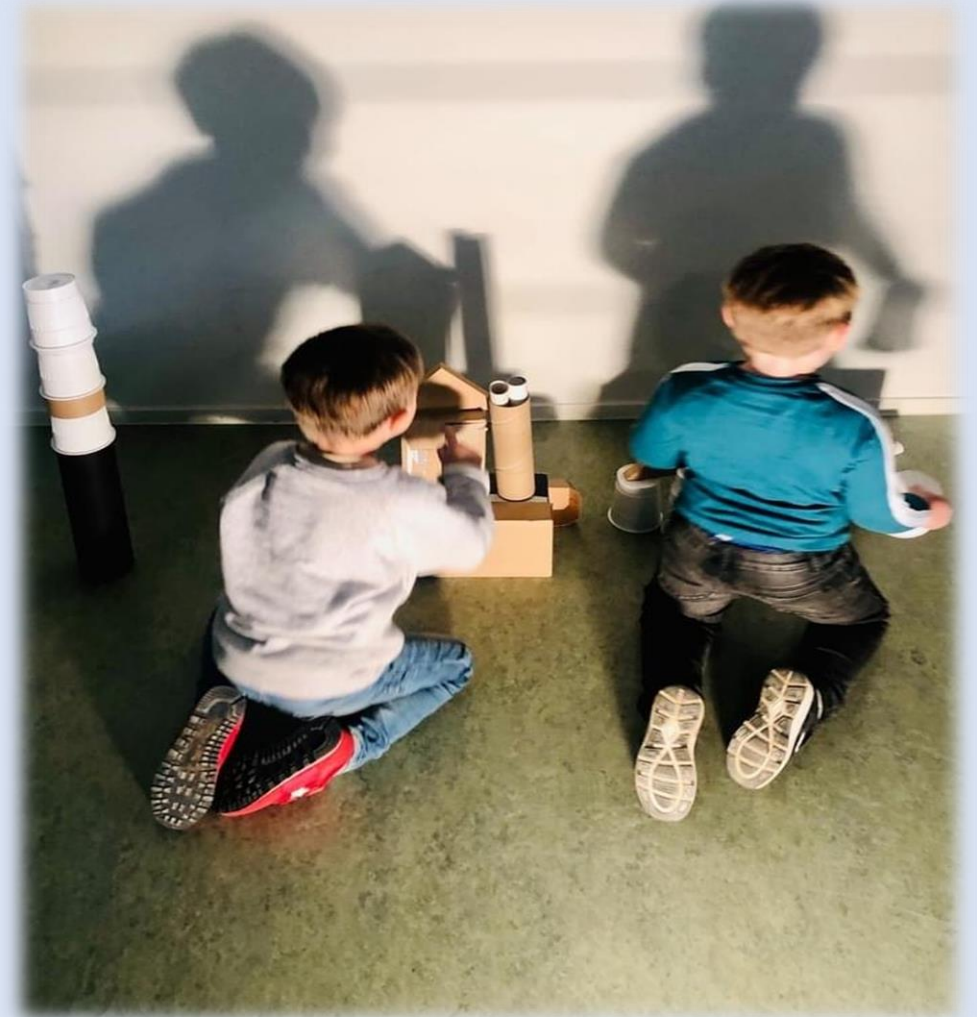


# What are We Learning About How Play-based Learning Supports Well-Being?

## Multiple Perspectives Matter

Paying attention to non-verbal communication.

Children are capable of empathy, detecting bias, seeing different perspectives, perceiving and managing a range of complex emotions.



# Going on a Virtual Pedagogical Walk #1

Implementering av "pedagogisk vandring"  
som metode i alle barnehager for å sikre  
progresjon og utvikling i organisasjonen

<https://holmestrand.kommune.no/trygghet-mestring-og-laring-for-alle/handlingsplan-for-kommunale-barnehager-2020-2021/>



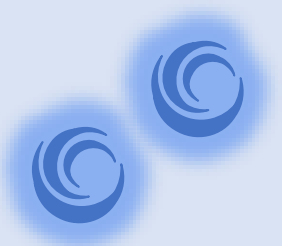
# During the next phase of our PCI we observe without judgement and consider...

- When I saw.... It made me question is this evidence of...?
- What / when/ why / how/ with whom might you notice and name what you saw and heard?
- What was the impact...?
- What other information do I need?
- What experiences best support this information?
- What else am I curious about?

Talk , Listen Learn While We Go On  
A Pedagogical Walk

**Planning  
to Act**

- We act on assessment information.





# How Will We Notice, Name and Make Visible Children's Well-Being (Life Skills and Mental Health) in Their Play? – Pedagogical Walk #1

1) How does the learning environment support well-being?

2) Children co-constructed this environment - what do you see that might be evidence of co-construction?

3) What is the impact on children's well-being and learning?

- **Discuss in your group the questions using the four photographs (slides 34-38)**

- **Please document your thinking in the chat box**



# Thinking Together About the Documentation from the Pedagogical Walk

- When I saw.... It made me question is this evidence of...?
- What materials will support this assessment information?
- What was the impact of?
- What other information do I need?
- What experiences best support this information?
- What does the pupil think about their learning?



## Acting to Make Sense

- We reflect on our actions to find meaning

# Building on Our Thinking Together...





# What are we Learning About How Play-based Learning Supports Language Development?

Thinking about literacy in the broadest possible way

Utgangspunktet for arbeidet er de tre språkkompetansene, muntlig, lesing og skriving. **Språklig kompetanse handler også om ikke-verbalt språk** (dvs. språk som uttrykkes uten ord), og barn og studenter i Holmestrand må bli klar over sitt eget kroppsspråk og hvordan dette kan påvirke forholdet mellom mennesker.



# What are we Learning About How Play-based Learning Supports Language Development?

**Children are more capable than we previously understood:**

Children can think critically about what they see, hear, and read; and to express themselves by using language in a variety of creative ventures.

Children will navigate a text- and media-saturated world in order to meet the challenges of an ever-more-complex society.





# What are We Learning ?

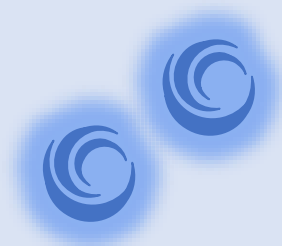
## Connecting Well-Being and Language Skills



### What We Say and Do in Our Interactions Matters

We can make a difference in well-being through relationship interactions

Moving our language from **CORRECTING** and **DIRECTING** towards **CONNECTING**





# Play as the pathway to learning now and for the future...

When we say that school is not a preparation for life but *is* life, this means assuming the responsibility to create a context in which words such as **creativity, change, innovation, error, doubt** and **uncertainty**, when used on a daily basis, can truly be developed and become real.

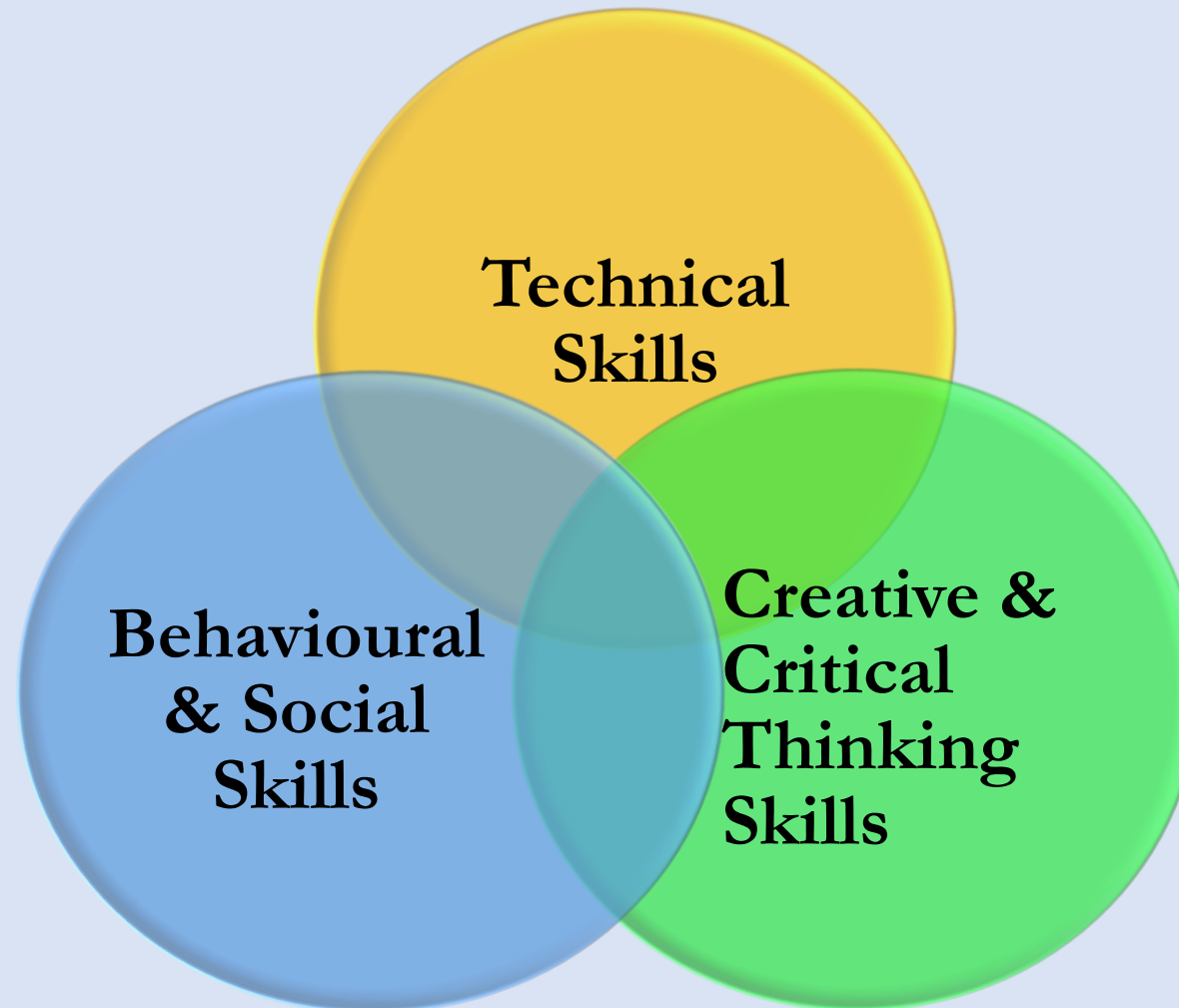
C. Rinaldi, *The Teacher as Researcher*, 2003, p.



# Skills for Innovation



OECD, 2019: 53





**Learning through exploration, play, and inquiry –**  
As children learn through play and inquiry, they develop – and have the opportunity to practice every day many of the **skills and competencies that they will need in order to thrive in the future**, including the ability to engage in **innovative and complex problem-solving and critical and creative thinking**; to **work collaboratively with others**; and to **take what is learned and apply it in new situations** in a constantly changing world.

*The Kindergarten Program, 2016 p.11*



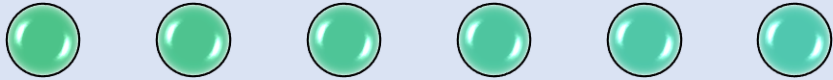






# Play-Based Learning

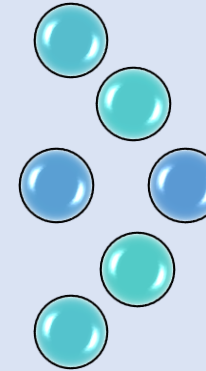
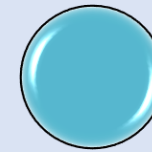
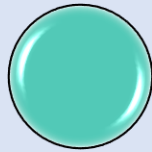
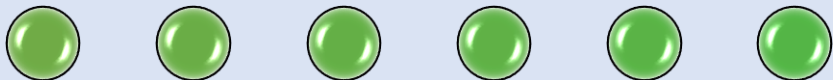
Prior Knowledge for Application  
& Deeper Learning



Imagining, Inquiring,  
Doing & Reflecting



Openness & Curiosity





What planning and decision-making did the educator team make about play-based learning?

What do you notice about the learning environment?





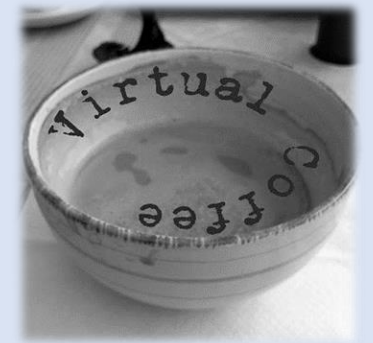
# Going on a Virtual Pedagogical Walk #2



Use the photographs from slides 51-77.

1) Discuss the question, How will we notice, name and make visible children's well-being and literacy in their play?

2) Add the teacher-voice and planning:  
Read pages 12, 13 and 14 in  
*Planning Early Literacy with an Inquiry Mindset*





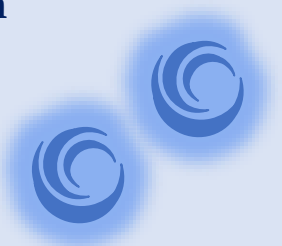
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- What other information do I need?
- What experiences best support this information?
- What else am I curious about?

Talk , Listen Learn While We Go On  
A Pedagogical Walk

**Planning  
to Act**

- We act on assessment information.



# A teacher's reflection on the impact of their Professional Inquiry on giving children more choice and voice

When you come into our Kindergarten community, you'll witness a shift in who is doing the talking. More children are communicating their ideas, opinions, and questions to each other, throughout the day. You will see us documenting the children's verbal and non-verbal communication through audio and video recordings, so that the children can revisit their conversations and think about what they want to do next. You will see them beginning to notice who they are, and getting to know each other better. The Kindergarten Program 2016 p. 50



**What do you notice? What might the children be saying and doing? What do you notice about the educator?**





# Learning to notice and name the literacy and mathematics learning in many contexts



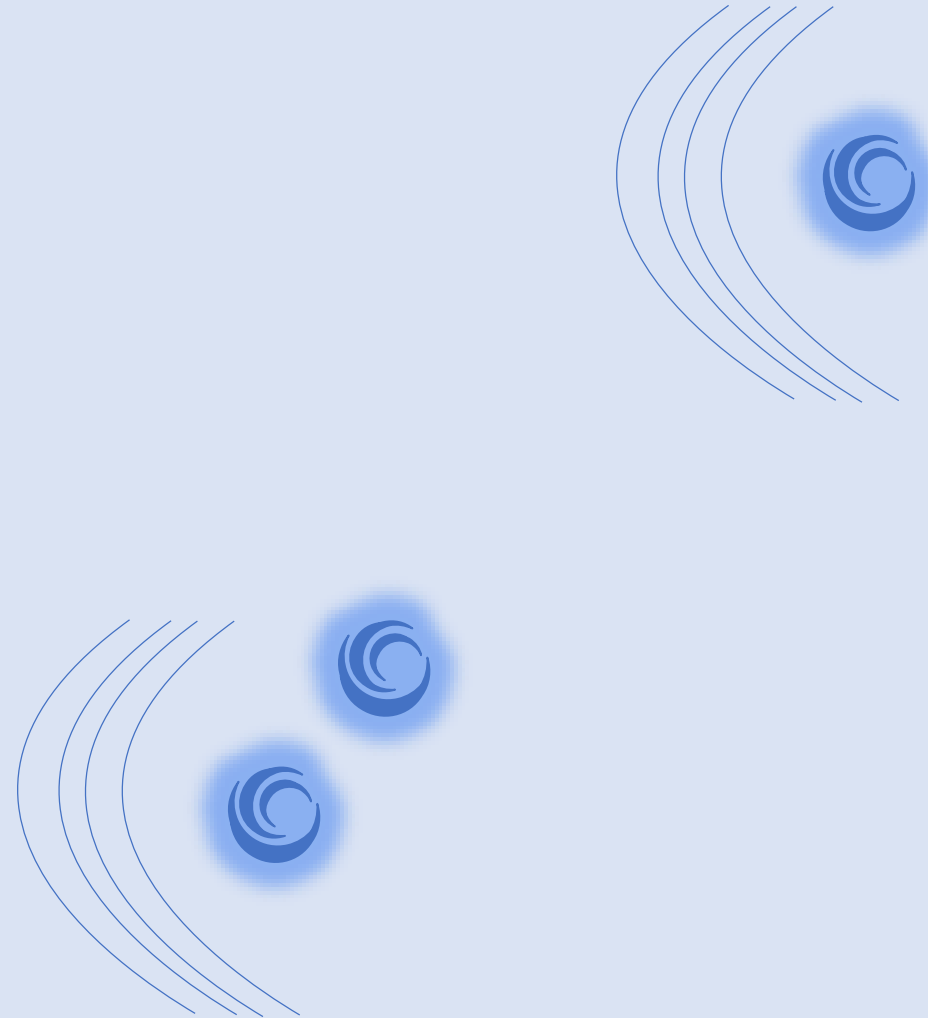
**How do the materials provoke thinking?**



**Children are  
Competent and  
Capable of Complex  
Thinking  
What are we  
Learning?**



# What are the critical roles the educator plays in the children's learning?





# Going on a Virtual Pedagogical Walk #3

Adding in the children's voices

Listening in on an interaction children wondered...

Video *What is the 'Real' Alphabet?*

4 and 5-year-olds debate



# Scenarios - Barnehage

What does children's voice and choice look like in our Kindergartens?

*Livsmestring*: What aspect of well-being is a priority in your context?

How can we build our *Skills* to support early literacy in play-based learning?



# Go to the # in the Break Out Rooms of your Selected Scenario

- Share what you did as a leadership team?
- What was the evidence you used to come to your thinking on the scenario you selected?
- What is common in your approach?
- What is different?
- Share out with the larger group when we gather together.





# Synthesizing Our Learning Together...

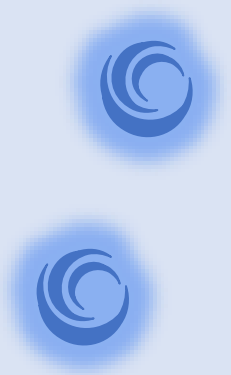


# Plan, Act, Observe, Reflect...

- When I saw.... It made me question is this evidence of...?
- What materials will support this assessment information?
- What was the impact of?
- What other information do I need?
- What experiences best support this information?
- What does the pupil think about their learning?

## Acting to Make Sense

- We reflect on our actions to find meaning



# Making Sense to Refine and Learn

- We adjust and refine our teaching based on ongoing assessment information

**Making  
Sense to  
Refine &  
Learn**





# Slowing Down

When a piece of documentation seems puzzling, **educators gain important insights into the child's thinking and learning** by taking the time for **deep analysis and interpretation** from multiple perspectives – the child's, the parents', and that of other educators – and by going back to obtain additional evidence.

Recognizing that learning is a complex process, educators understand the importance of “slowing down” – of taking the time to listen and observe, in an “inquiry stance.”



# What are we Learning from Educators in the Field?

"The evidence collected through our documentation allowed us to see the many possibilities for children's thinking and learning to be made visible.

Using various forms of documenting student learning challenged the teams to see children differently. This allowed for different kinds of demonstrations of learning that moved us all beyond what we had come to expect, and led us to a place of valuing each child's contribution.

What was made visible was the learning process of children, their multiple languages and the strategies used by each child."


# Our Adult Inquiry Stance

“Through inquiry people recognize a problem, mobilize resources, engage actively to resolve it, collaborate, and reflect on the experience. Making sense of experiences in this way, and doing so in concert with others in embodied, historical circumstances, is fundamental to learning.”

*Bertram, C. Bishop and Ann Peterson Bishop, (2007)*

*University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*



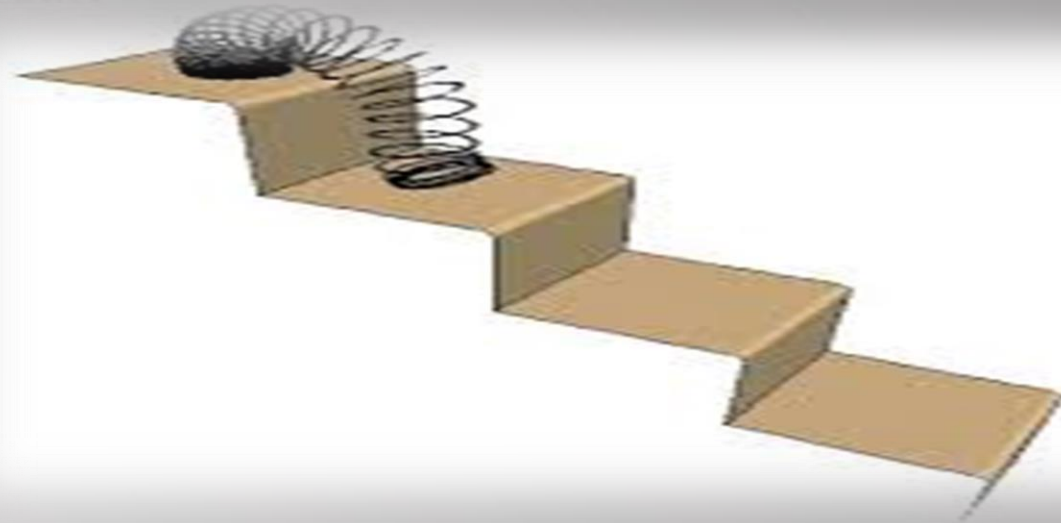
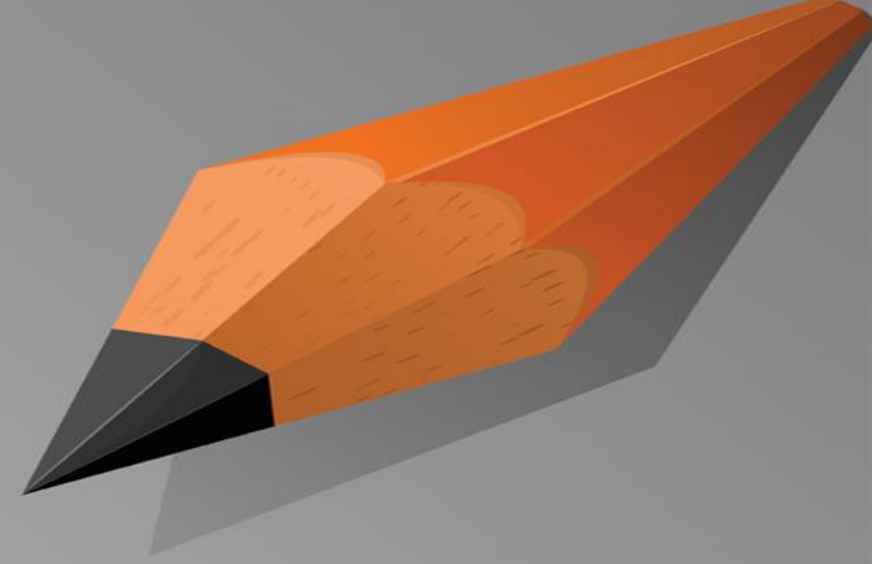


“We don’t have to be perfect to make a difference. We need to care deeply about our impact on kids, care deeply about our words, and we need to embrace our humanness.

Meghan Lawson From #InnovateInsideTheBox

# Tusen Takk

## Questions?



## Next Steps: Where Next?

