

# **Making change happen: Secure, responsive educator-infant relationships**

## **Be You in Practice webinar series**

Facilitated by: Karin Humphrey and Trish Osgood

**Karin Humphrey:** Hello, everyone. Welcome to our second In Practice webinar for 2026. This one is called Making change happen - Educator and infant relationships. My name is Karin Humphrey, and I'm a Be You consultant with Early Childhood Australia. I'm based in Adelaide, in South Australia on Kurna Yerta. And I am joined by Trish. Trish, would you like to introduce yourself?

**Trish Osgood:** Yeah, hi, I'm Trish. I'm also a Be You consultant. I'm based in, Naarm, which is Melbourne. So, thanks, Karin.

**Karin Humphrey:** Thank you. So moving on to our focus for today, and you can see that on the screen, it's Making change happen - Educator-infant relationships to support children's mental health. So this is definitely following on and following through from when we had our In Focus webinar, sorry, I had to think of the right word then, so this leads on from that, the practice piece around the information that was shared in that webinar. So we really want you to consider that at the heart of implementation, what we would like you to do differently, and how we are going to support you to change practice, is kind of what we're going to be talking about a little bit today.

But before I move on, I'd like to acknowledge that I am meeting with you from Tarntanya, Adelaide, and I acknowledge the Kurna people as the traditional owners and custodians of the country on which I live, work, and play. I acknowledge their continuing connection to yerta, which is the earth, ngayirda - the sky, and kauwi, the water. I pay my respects to elders past, present, and those who are becoming. I also extend my respect to any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that may be joining us today, and I acknowledge that this land always was, and always will be, Aboriginal land. Trish, you've already mentioned a little bit about where you've joined us from?

**Trish Osgood:** Yeah, so I sit on boon wurrung country, which is part of the greater Kulin Nation. So yeah, I pay my respects to the elders of the lands that I'm on today. So, thanks.

**Karin Humphrey:** Thank you. Karin Humphrey: And feel free to pop in the chat the lands that you're from if you would like to acknowledge. We really appreciate that.

Okay, so before we go any deeper into the topic for today, we'd really like to talk about the fact that the content we're going to discuss does include topics that are

related to mental health and wellbeing. So we really want you to remember to take care of yourself during this time and at any point, if you feel uncomfortable, you're encouraged to take a break or to step away. If you need support, please identify those people that you would reach out for support. That could be a trusted colleague, it could be a leader, or you can refer to the mental health services and support information that you can see on your screen. And Kat, who is supporting us today, sorry, Kat, I forgot to acknowledge you at the beginning, will pop a link to this infographic in the chat for you. It's readily available on the Be You website, downloadable, printable, and you can display it in your centre, so people have ready access to this information. Alright, so today we're going to explore all of those things that you can see on the screen, starting with the key messages from last month's webinar on educator-infant relationships that Drs Robyn Dolby and Belinda Friezer supported us with and gave lots and lots of information. So we'll focus on that structure.

So, on the left, you'll see what we're planning to cover, and we really want to give practical examples of implementation of mental health and wellbeing goals that are really linked to that educator and infant relationship piece. We really want you to have a look at the stuff that's on this right-hand side of the screen, the 'you could' part. We really want, when we're exploring the content, it'd be awesome if you could focus on the 'you could' section. So that you could jot down some thoughts on what secure, responsive, educator-infant relationships mean to you. Think about that, jot them down as you're going. Jot down any of the little things that we talk about that might ring true for you. We really want you to also consider how you might enhance your current practice in this area. What are you already doing? What could you be doing differently? And what do you want to be doing better? And that's really focusing on that continuous improvement piece.

We really want you to encourage and reflect, we really want you to reflect on, sorry, the implementation principles and practices that we chat about today. That will underpin all of what we chat about, and we'll link it back to those each and every time we talk about something new. We want you to consider how they can strengthen your existing planning and continuous improvement. And what's not on the screen, and a couple of things, other things that you could consider. How is the information we share with you going to support your planning for change around mental health and wellbeing? And what would you take back to your team to share and discuss, so that everyone has a voice in what you're thinking about? How would you involve your team in deciding on your next steps?

And I do want to acknowledge that while we're facilitating this discussion live today, the webinar is being recorded, with our aim being for it to be used as a learning tool for services. And for you, as we move forward. Okay. So, let's have a little recap on the infant and mental health In Focus webinar that we did back in May. I'm trying to

think of dates. Time's just flying by so fast. So, up on the screen, you can see the key messages that were taken from that. Drs. Robyn Dolby and Belinda Friezer gave us so much information. They shared their insights, and we took a lot away from that. And we've used that information to really shape our, In Practice webinar today. So, up the top it says 'infant mental health is all about infants' capacities to grow and love well'. By growing and loving well, we really think that that encompasses experiencing and expressing the full range of emotions and including the regulating of those. And that includes recovering from having big feelings. It also encompasses establishing trusting relationships, being confident to explore and learn, and being able to engage and practice engaging with peers so that you can form close bonds with those peers and develop a sense of belonging within your environment. Robyn and Belinda really acknowledged, while they were talking to us in the webinar, that building secure relationships with children isn't always easy. It takes a lot of emotional work by educators in order to make these relationships with the infants in your care meaningful and sustainable. So there really needs, for infants to develop positive mental health and wellbeing, there really needs to be a focus on relationships and regulation. And by regulation at this age, we really do mean that external regulation, so the way that we support children to regulate, or regulate for them, and that co-regulation piece. Infants are looking to be seen, soothed, and to feel safe and secure, emotionally and physically.

And one of the things we're going to touch on throughout the webinar today is the four stepping stones approach. The handover of care is very important for making infants feel safe, and when children watch and see and hear their educator in their relationships with their parents, they learn about what secure relationships really look like. So the four stepping stones approach includes all of those things that you can see on the screen, and we'll be weaving this approach into our conversations today. But the goodbye ceremony really allows the infant to observe the handover between their parent and their parent or caregiver and their educator and showing that the two people have a good relationship, and they know what to do to best support them.

Okay, Trish, I'm going to let you talk for a while, shall I?

**Trish Osgood:** Yeah, thanks, Karin, and thanks that was a big effort there, so thank you for getting through all that, but yeah. And I love the recap, so yeah, it was good to remember what, what we spoke about in our In Focus webinar. So, today we're going to take a bit of a deep dive into the how of making change, around secure and responsive education, educator and infant relationships. So when we say how, we mean the principles and practices. That you can use to take the idea of the four stepping stones approach, from our In Focus webinar, and plan to improve your practice. So, at Be You, we use implementation principles to frame our work with children to support children's mental health. Implementation principles provide a framework for making meaningful and sustainable change. So, Karin, can you give us

the basic principles of implementation? I can see a couple of different things on our screen here.

**Karin Humphrey:** Yeah, and I don't know if the audience have noticed, but the size of the boxes is a kind of a bit of a hint, really, as to how when we make change, the way we do it can be really big and really meaningful, or it can have less of an impact. So, if we look at the three concepts on the slide, the smaller the box, the less likely the change will be successful and or sustainable. So, implementation principles and practices sit in that pink box, and it helps us move beyond diffusing and disseminating information, which is in the blue and the purple boxes, to making actual changes that is embedded into our practice. The clue is really in that phrase where it says, make it happen. The other practices are important and necessary, and we will use them at some stage, but implementation itself turns information, ideas, and evidence-based practice into actual change. So, as Trish has already mentioned, implementation is about the how. So the how is just as important as the what when it comes to improving mental health. The how involves being purposeful about planning, and we're really going to go deeper into all of this as we move through the webinar. Being clear about what you want to change or improve, and how you are going to make changes and improvements happen. So, it's also about the why. So, having a clear purpose and vision for where you want to be and why your plan change will make a positive difference to mental health is really key to ensuring change is sustainable.

Okay, Trish, we always think as consultants that implementation when we talk about it from a Be You perspective sounds like something more to do, and it's in addition to your existing planning. Can you talk to that a little bit for us, please?

**Trish Osgood:** Yeah, thanks, Karin. I'm glad you actually brought that up because implementation principles are not actually something extra. They're really about the how. As you're already planning for change, in the things that you're already doing through your quality improvement planning process, so a lot of the documentation you're already doing the planning that you're already doing. It's already planning for change, so we really need to kind of think of implementation as the principles and the practices that support your quality improvement planning. And help you to embed that planning across the service. So, we are really kind of concentrating on the how today. So generally, implementation helps you transform your intentions into an actionable plan. So, you might have policies, you might have some goals that you've set in your QIP, for example but the implementation is about, oh, how are we going to get there? How are we going to achieve that? And it's just, you know, it's likely to make it more effective. So, in today's webinar, we're going to focus on 5 key parts of implementation that's shown on the slide. So, Karin, can you talk us through the 5 parts that we're talking about today?

**Karin Humphrey:** Sure, sure. So let's start from the left and work our way to the right. Kind of makes sense, doesn't it? So the first part of implementation that we'll focus on today, and we'll do this using a service example as we move forward, is the vision for change. So having a vision for change really helps you articulate where you want to be. And your vision for change comes from identifying issues, challenges, and gaps. Or, those opportunities to enhance practice. What are we already doing, and how can we enhance that? The second part of implementation we will focus on is setting goals. These goals help you realize your vision for change, and the goals are the steps or the checkpoints that help you move towards where you want to be. And then we really have to look at our barriers and enablers, barriers make sense. The things that might get in the way of making change, get in the way of achieving your goals, get in the way of reaching your destination. Whereas enablers are the things that you can draw on to help you make the change we really think about enablers sometimes as the ways to overcome your barriers, but we really know that this can only happen if you have identified a change strategy. Have a look at the next one and have planned actions, the next one again, in place. So otherwise, it can become a 'let it happen' approach. So can you remember back to the previous stage? Previous slide, sorry. So, when we talked about that, the 'let it happen' will help with some form of change, but it may not be sustainable and long-term. So, we can't expect the enablers to work on their own. So implementation principles stress the importance of not just knowing what the barriers might be but also choosing the right strategies to address these barriers. So your change strategies should help you overcome barriers, as well as to effectively utilize your enablers, and that will assist you to make the change needed. Change strategies then require planning actions, all the steps that put those strategies in place.

Trish, I've said a lot, again, about implementation principles and practices. Can you summarise that a little bit for our audience, please?

**Trish Osgood:** Yeah, so I'll just sum it up in the context of a service. So, if you're using your implementation principles and practices, like we've got on the screen here, it's basically just taking what you've put in your policies and procedures and things, and making it just very intentional. So we're actually going to plan to make those changes, so in a more strategic way. So, implementation principles and practices really support what you're already doing through your quality improvement planning process.

**Karin Humphrey:** And what Trish said is it really enhances the fact that it's not additional work. You're already doing your quality improvement planning. You're already looking at continuous improvement as part of your embedded practice, so adding this in is just working with. Okay, so now we're going to take all of that background information that we've just shared with you, and we're going to walk through an example of what a service has been doing to implement that four

stepping stones approach that Robyn and Belinda spoke about in the webinar. We'll explain their vision for change in goals, their barriers and enablers they identified, and their change strategies and actions that they chose to support the change process and to minimise the barriers and strengthen their enablers. So, Trish is taking on the role here of the consultant of this service, so she's going to explain a lot about what the service has done, and I will ask Trish a lot of questions, which may make sense to you, and you may want to take back yourself when you're thinking about the change process for your service. Okay, Trish, can you talk a little bit about the service and give us some background before we do a deeper dive?

**Trish Osgood:** Yeah, sure. So, this service is, a long day care centre in a metropolitan, city. There are actually two infant rooms at the service, staffed by two educators in each room. There has been a recent turnover of staff, as you can see, as it says on the slide, and their, and half of the educators in the infant's room are both new to the service, and also new to the early childhood sector. The leadership team have been discussing ways to support the new team who are working in the infants room, recognising the important role of educators in making infants feel safe and secure through, particularly through morning transitions. So, what we're going to do is we're going to start our explanation of the planning the service has been doing to support the new educators in the infants room with morning transitions. Karin, can you explain what we mean by vision of change before we actually get into what the service's vision of change is?

**Karin Humphrey:** Yeah, I think that's a great idea. I think if we give a bit of an example or a definition of what vision of change is, and then explain how the service has done it, it's going to work perfectly for our audience. So, all of the words are up on the slide, but I'll go through them. So, a vision for change is really an aspirational, and it can be inspirational, broad statement of what you want, what you want for and where you would like your service to be. It gives you really, it's something really concrete to work towards, and it requires really clear and intentional planning. So your vision for change comes from understanding and articulating an issue, a gap, or a challenge that could be addressed to enhance your practice. Or maybe it comes from identifying an opportunity, because we talked about that before, too. We're already doing this. What's our opportunity for growth here? Or how can we do this a little bit differently so we're continuously improving? And that'll contribute to building and sustaining a mentally healthy learning community. Your vision really should articulate what you would like to do differently that will support the mental health and wellbeing of your beneficiaries. And by the term beneficiaries, we mean the children, the families, and or your team, or a combination of all. It really provides, your vision for change really provides a focus for all of your other planning. Everything you do is for the purpose of achieving your vision. That's why it's really important to be intentional about what you're doing.

Alright, Trish, let's think about this service. What's the vision of change that they, vision for change that they came up with?

**Trish Osgood:** Yeah. So the service's vision is on the screen now. So it's, they've stated it as, our children experience calm and subtle transitions into care that support the nurturing of safe, secure relationships with their educators and ensure parents feel confident to leave their children in the educator's care.

**Karin Humphrey:** Oh, great. So, what led the service to want to make this change?

**Trish Osgood:** Yeah, so in addition to some of the educators in the infant's room being new to the early childhood sector and the service, the director realised that some of the children were actually struggling to settle in at the mornings drop-off. And that was also showing signs of anxiety when they were separating from their parents. The Director recognised the importance of educator-infant relationships, cemented through transitions for infant mental health. They were also a bit concerned about the wellbeing of their educators, whose confidence to care for the infants in their room and their own stress levels were impacted by the children's anxiety. And also when the Director spoke or even observed some of the parents of the infants at the service and was told that they were experiencing anxiety themselves at morning drop-off when they were heading off to work, feeling concerned about how their children were settling, once they'd left.

**Karin Humphrey:** Okay, so I see that what they were currently doing really impacted, was impacting mental health and wellbeing. So what does the service expect to see being done differently, in all like, when their vision has been achieved?

**Trish Osgood:** Yeah, that's a good question, because we really need to know where we're going to go with it all. So, in this situation, the service expects to see a clear and intentional and consistent morning transitions into care where the children are calm and settled, of course. The service expects to see parents, more calm and less anxious about leaving their child at the service. And in addition, the service expects to see educators a bit more confident and calm during the morning transitions and using language that responds to the children's needs.

**Karin Humphrey:** Okay, so I can really see that that change will positively influence mental health and wellbeing. Is there anything else that will positively influence that, do you think?

**Trish Osgood:** Yeah, I guess the change is expected to have a positive influence on educator stress, parent anxiety on leaving the centre, and on children's mental health. The change is really just also expected to support secure and responsive infant, and educator relationships. And we really want that to be a strength in the service.

**Karin Humphrey:** Okay, so you've mentioned a little bit about change, which I think, you know, we're going to be talking about within this as well. So, who or what needs to change, and in what ways?

**Trish Osgood:** Yeah, so obviously the current transition practices need to be enhanced or reviewed to support children to experience calm and settled transitions. So, the educators need to embed the change transition practice into their morning routine. The focus is on, all children and their families, and is suggestive of a whole-of-service approach to morning transitions. The vision is a broad statement of the kind of service that they would like to be, and the vision reflects an aspirational and inspirational future state. So, they obviously know where they want to be, and they just want to be able to action, put some actions into place to get there.

So, the service articulated their vision for change, and what they expected to see as a result of implementing their change. When they needed to set goals to achieve their vision for change, they, they needed to identify some, some, their, their barriers and, and their goals and their enablers, as well as the change strategies, which is what we're going to be leading up to over the next couple of slides. But, Karin, before we go there, can you explain the difference between a vision for change and goals? Because we're going to talk about goals next.

**Karin Humphrey:** For sure. So we've already said this in a way, but a vision is how I articulate your endpoint, or your destination, but the goals are the steps you need to take to reach that destination. So, this is where we want to be, this is what we need to do to get there. So, when you are setting goals, you're thinking more intentionally about who or what needs to change. So when we say who needs to change, we really mean the people whose behaviour you would like to change, to enhance what you are doing to improve. And then when we say what needs to change, we mean what specifically about behaviour needs to change. When we say how, we mean through which mechanism you intend to change behaviour, and we'll give a little bit of an example about that. We can draw from implementation principles by considering the how a little bit like this. So behaviour change is really supported by changing or improving your service's practices, policies, procedures, programs, principles, philosophy, all of the things that guide what you do. This is what we mean by the mechanism for change. Trish, can you give us an example of a mechanism of change, please?

**Trish Osgood:** Yeah, sure, Karin. So, for example, changing a policy around something gives you the mechanism for changing behaviours, the policy guides behaviour, and what you expect from the team. And it feeds into the goals as well. So one way to think about goals is like this. To achieve our vision for change, we need to do something differently by changing or adapting or enhancing a principle, policy, procedure, practice, and or program.

**Karin Humphrey:** Okay, that makes sense. Thank you.

**Trish Osgood:** Yeah. So, thanks for explaining that, Karin. I'm going to actually talk about one of the service's goals. Now, it says one of the service's goals, because I'd just like to note that obviously, to achieve the vision for change, you need to put in multiple actions. The service has more than one goal to achieve their vision for change, because it looks at the parental aspects as well. But for today's webinar, we're going to actually just look at the particular ones that are related to the educators, and the four stepping stones approach. So, to achieve this service has said, to achieve our vision for change, we'll embed a new transition practice into our morning routines that follows the principles of the four stepping stones approach. And so, as part of this, yeah, they're going to examine that and break that down from there.

**Karin Humphrey:** Okay, so how does... how does this goal specify what is needed to be done to change?

**Trish Osgood:** Yeah, so the goal is clear that what needs to change is the service's transition practice. It's clear that the change practice needs to be embedded into the service. So that it's an intentional, consistent change that will support all children, educators, and families through the morning transitions. The goal focuses on practice change, for educators, so when we're talking about all the different P's, the policies, processes, and procedures, we're actually picking a practice this time. They have other goals to achieve their vision, like I said, for example, the family partnerships to support the new transitions practice, but they we're just going to talk about the four stepping stones approach for today's purpose, yeah.

**Karin Humphrey:** Okay, so by acknowledging, change in practice and changing the principles, that's really the mechanism for change. Have I got that right?

**Trish Osgood:** Yeah, the main mechanism for change is practice, so but the change is also being supported by changing principles, too. The practice change is around how educators perform morning transitions.

**Karin Humphrey:** Right. So how will this mechanism for change help achieve the vision, and in what ways?

**Trish Osgood:** Yeah, so, the change relates to the ideas and the four stepping stones approach that we outlined earlier, that Belinda and Robyn spoke about in our In Focus webinar. So practice is about are about what you do. The principles are about how you do it. So the principles are guiding rules or beliefs that shape behaviour. The service decided sorry, I'll say that again, the service decided to apply the principles of the four stepping stones approach as a practice. And then they also decided to apply the principles of upskilling to ensure the required behaviour change of the educators would happen.

**Karin Humphrey:** Okay, so yeah, that does make well, it makes sense to me. I hope it makes sense to our audience as well. So really, that goal has been designed to support the achievement of the vision for change, right? Have I got that right?

**Trish Osgood:** Yeah, so the vision for change articulates an aspirational future where children experience calm and settled morning transitions, as we've, stated before. But, as part of that, changing the services transitions practice for morning routines will help reach the vision by enhancing current practices using the principles of the four stepping stones approach.

**Karin Humphrey:** Okay. One of the things that we always need to consider when we're putting goals in place and writing them down is how are they actionable and measurable?

**Trish Osgood:** Yeah, we want to see if it actually made a difference, right? So, the goal is actionable, as embedding a new transition practice is something tangible, it can be done to achieve the vision, so that's that's quite a practical thing you could do. But if we want to talk about how it's measurable, so it is measurable as the service can measure that the new practice has been embedded, and they can, measure the outcomes of the new practice for children and families and educator mental health in terms of more settled infants, lower educator stress, and also less parent anxiety. So there's lots of mechanisms you can do to actually gather that data, yeah, to, including anecdotal data as well.

So, Karin, the, service articulated their vision for change and set goals to achieve it. So we've, we've walked through one of their goals, that having a vision for change is an intentional way to plan for changing goals, to give you the steps to get there. And all the research on change tells us, though, that it is important to know your context, as change doesn't exist in a vacuum. And it's implemented in a particular place, in a particular group of people. So, Karin, do you want to tell us a little bit more about, about this?

**Karin Humphrey:** Yeah, for sure. It's really important to understand your context when we're thinking about a vision for change and thinking about the goals and in order to understand your context, we really need to consider the barriers and enablers that will support change or hinder change. So, as it says on the screen, barriers are what might get in the way of making change, and enablers are the people and resources and all of the other things you can see in the orange box that might make that change easier. Being intentional, and I've said this word a lot, and I'll probably say it a lot more before the end of the webinar, being intentional about identifying barriers and enablers really means reflecting on how and why they might get in the way of achieving a vision for change, or how they might help you achieve it. Being intentional, see, I've said it again, also means thinking about the different types of barriers that might get in the way of change.

So barriers can be individual, they could be within your service, or they could be barriers external to your service, those systemic ones that are really hard for you to change. Barriers can also be related to what you are changing and how. For example, and Trish used this one before, you might identify a barrier around a policy you want to review and update, and the policy itself is the barrier. So, identifying barriers and enablers is part of being intentional, there it goes again, and strategic about making change. Recognising what might cause roadblocks to, and what might encourage change, so your barriers and your enablers, allows you to better plan for this change by allocating the necessary resources and setting realistic expectations. Because we all know that sometimes we can have a really great idea, but our expectation's not quite so realistic, so breaking it down is really important. So, Trish, shall we have a look at what the barriers and enablers are of this service, and what they identified?

**Trish Osgood:** Yeah, let's do that. So the barriers and enablers that the service identified are on the screen now. So let's unpack them. Firstly, we want to note that the service focused on barriers and enablers from an individual perspective, that's the educators and leaders, and barriers within the service. So let's have a look at the, let's actually have a look at the enablers first, Karin. So, in the pink box. So the identified enablers can be mapped to capability, motivation, opportunities. They relate to learning the four stepping stones approach. So the service already has a strong leadership support, which is amazing, and this is always something that always helps in an organisation. With change, leaders set the tone and direction in an organisation, and they set expectations for their team, so they're absolutely an enabler of change. So the service has worked with their Be You consultant for some time, and have prior access, had had prior success with implementing changes to the service culture to support educator wellbeing, and as a bit of a natural flow-on, working, you know, working from that, and working with the Be You Consultant as an enabler for change, has actually helped to create the culture that's been quite receptive in this situation. So, and we do note that if you're out there listening today, that, your Be You consultant is an enabler for change, so you can reach out to them to help you work through this process. You don't always have to do it on your own, and you don't have to understand, necessarily understand it. We can actually work with you and help step you through this process as well.

So, one of the most important enablers is that educators are willing to learn and try new practices to support children's mental health. So, the willingness helps the leaders bring about change to morning transitions, as there's already a buy-in from the, for change and there's a recognition that the service needs to make change to support infants and their families at the morning handover of care. So this motivation in itself is the key to effectively making change.

So, I'll talk about the barriers now, too. So, while the service recognises the value of the new transitions approach, as has the educators, willing to try new practices.

There is a time commitment in a busy service to learning and implementing the four stepping stones approach. So, obviously, resources need to be committed to making the change to support learning and translation to practice. So, there are staffing considerations in terms of how the practice will be embedded into morning transition routines, given the current staffing and schedules, the ratio of educators to infants in the two infants rooms. Importantly, the service leaders have discussed with their Be You consultant that training is only the first step in that behaviour change. Training alone is not a guarantee of change, as the learning needs to be translated, obviously, into practice.

One of the other barriers that they found was, just also about, we've talked about the time, the staffing, and the resources, and also about how to approach the learning and the behaviour change. So, they really needed to, we really, they really needed to break that down into a bit of a plan.

**Karin Humphrey:** Okay, so up on the screen, Trish, we've got what the barriers and enablers are. How are they identified by the service?

**Trish Osgood:** Yeah, good question, because sometimes we're not always aware of what they might be. Sometimes they might be as obvious as the nose on our face, but sometimes they're not. So, yeah, the research on implementation tells us that for people to change, they need the capability, the opportunity, or motivation to change. So the opportunity, to change relates to being in an environment that supports them to change. So, two of the enablers that the service identified can be mapped to the opportunity to change. That was the Be You consultant and the leadership support. The other one is about motivation. That's the educators who are willing to learn and try new practices. The three barriers, on the other hand, that the service identified can be mapped to capability and opportunity. So the capability is about the learning required to make the change, while the other barriers align with the opportunity, which is the staffing and resources and the time.

**Karin Humphrey:** Okay, that makes perfect sense, thank you.

**Trish Osgood:** Yeah, no worries at all. So, what happens next is that you need to identify the right strategies to support the change process. So, Karin, can you talk us through what happens next, please?

**Karin Humphrey:** For sure I can. So, strategies need to be identified, and they, the ones that do need to be identified are called change strategies, as you can see on the screen, and they're really designed to help eliminate or minimise those barriers, and further strengthen your enablers, both of which help make change happen. So, like all of the implementation activities we've talked about today, it's important to be intentional about choosing your change strategies. Any strategy you choose, should help you reach your goals and achieve your vision for change. So we take those

backward steps and help you eliminate or minimise your barriers. Another part about being intentional about change strategies is considering how these strategies can make your enablers even more effective in making change happen. Because on the flip side, your enablers can make your change strategies work better as well.

**Trish Osgood:** Thanks, Karin. That's really, that's really helpful, actually. So, let's talk about the change, the service's change strategies that they've chosen. So, we're going to, we're going to focus our explanation on change, of change strategies by exploring the strategies that the service used to address one of their identified barriers, and to strengthen one of their enablers. So, the strategies are on the screen now. The service worked with their Be You Consultant to identify these evidence-based strategies from the implementation research. The purpose of these strategies is to provide learning for the educators to implement the new transitions approach.

**Karin Humphrey:** So, so why did the service choose these particular change strategies?

**Trish Osgood:** Yeah, yeah, thanks. Thanks for asking that question, Karin, because it's hard to know what to use and what to choose sometimes, but team training was the, overarching change strategy, and this strategy is strengthened by the enabler of the educator's willingness to learn and try new practices. So we know that they're already engaged, they're already keen to learn, so, team training was the kind of the logical, strategy. The next one was team debriefing, and also the third one's mentorship. They also changed strategies to support educators to learn the new transitions approach, but also to strengthen the team training. Debriefing and mentoring supports learning and translation of that learning to practice. It also supports educators to grow in their confidence and capabilities through peer learning and opportunities to reflect on practice.

**Karin Humphrey:** Okay. Is there anything else, that the service really needs to consider here, Trish?

**Trish Osgood:** I think it's important that we make some comments about the time and resourcing barriers. We acknowledge that they are common barriers in the early childhood sector to making change, so the service leader is currently working with their Be You Consultant to look further at this barrier to better understand it. This work is being actioned by one-on-one and team conversations using change strategies such as, active listening and, brainstorming with the educators, which is, actually about that, fostering ownership and that shared commitment as well. And that decision-making structure, so they actually change strategies in themselves as well. Karin, do you want to talk us through the next step of the change process?

**Karin Humphrey:** Of course. It's the next one, if you remember, way back to that slide where we had all five. This is the fifth one there, which is our implementation

actions. So it's what you need to do to put your chosen change strategies into practice. So, we've already said that identifying change strategies is key to making change happen, but strategies are really just your ideas, unless you have a plan to action them, and you take the steps to do so. So, as it says on the slide, it really means considering why you need to take these actions to make the change strategies work, which then help you achieve your goals, which then help you reach your vision for change.

So, Trish, how is the service leader planning to put team training as a change strategy into practice?

**Trish Osgood:** Yeah, so the service leader is planning to source appropriate training, they're also working on how to schedule the training so that all the team members can attend. Sometimes this isn't necessarily about doing one whole session, sometimes it's about doing several sessions. But this involves reviewing schedules and individual circumstances that may influence attendance to ensure that the strategy is successful.

**Karin Humphrey:** Okay, and then the next one, it talks about debriefing. So what are the actions that the service is going to put into place here to ensure that part of their change strategy is effective?

**Trish Osgood:** Yeah, thanks, Karin, that's a good point. So the service leader's currently consulting with the whole team to obtain feedback on the most appropriate way, to embed debriefing into practice. This can be done through multiple modes and formats, so she's looking at learning styles and all sorts of things in that process. The service leader has identified that the need to ensure that debriefing is designed to support educators to be comfortable and confident with the four stepping stones approach. So it has to be something that they, they're on board, and they've had some buy-in, too, as well, yeah.

**Karin Humphrey:** All right, and I like the bottom one. I love the idea of identifying. Sorry, identifying champions to action change. We talk about that in Be You a lot. We want our wellbeing champions. Who can you identify? Who self-identifies as a wellbeing champion? So with this one, Trish, can you talk a little bit more about the mentoring approach and the plan for that in this?

**Trish Osgood:** Yeah, mentoring is, it's one key action to put the mentorship change strategy into practice is to identify champions of the new approach, to act as mentors. So these are people who have taken on board the learning and have easily put it into practice through and applied it. And are feeling confident as well, so they've been identified as champions in the early stages. And then they act as mentors and then plan to mentorship into practice. So they work with others. So all three change strategies and the actions to put them into practice are designed to

help make change happen through opportunities to learn about and practice the new transition approach, and identify ways to apply the approach to the service context. The strategies and the actions will be strengthened through leadership support and the educator's willingness to learn new practices. Okay. So there are, I do want to just note also, Karin, that there are other change strategies and actions that the service leader is working on to reach their goals and achieve their vision for change. This is ongoing work, so today we have focused on some of the activities the service leader is currently leading, in consultation with their team and the Be You consultant.

**Karin Humphrey:** Yeah, and that's a good point to raise, isn't it? That it's just part of their journey, and part of what they're doing. Yeah, thank you. So, to finish off our exploration of implementation, we'd like to say a few things about outcomes, because we really need to consider these when we're putting all of those actions and change strategies in place and addressing our barriers and enablers in order to reach our vision for change. So, all change activities are aimed at reaching your vision, as we've said, and seeing an implementation process outcome. And we've talked a lot about implementation principles today. So, outcomes are the expectations, or behaviour shifts, for, based on those implementation activities. So what's happened? When we've done these implementation activities, what's happened, and what have we achieved? The resulting effectiveness of your change work. Trish, can you then go back to now the service and the outcomes that they may be expecting to see?

**Trish Osgood:** Yeah, so we did revisit we did visit this earlier in, the webinar about what they were expecting to see, but we will revisit it now. So, we're just going to return to our vision for change, which is, obviously in on the, the right side of our screen, which is, our children experience calm and settled morning transitions into care that support the nurturing and safe, secure relationships with their educators and ensure parents feel confident to leave their children in the educators' care.

So the service is currently working on implementing the change strategies we have explored today and planning other change strategies to address the identified barriers. In their planning for change, the service is expecting to see the infants who attend the service to be calmer and more settled as a result of educators' change in practice to implement the four stepping stones approach. They are expecting educators to improve their confidence around morning transition, and as a result, their wellbeing will be enhanced. And they are expecting to see, stronger educator-infant relationships through building trust and connection and being responsive during morning transitions. And of course they are hopefully expecting that families report that they're less anxious about separating from their children at morning drop-off.

**Karin Humphrey:** So this is their expected outcomes, Trish. How are they going to measure those outcomes?

**Trish Osgood:** Yeah, thanks, Karin. We did touch on that a little bit earlier, but let's have a look at that now. So, this is an important part of the change process, and you need to have evidence that your vision has been reached, and your intentional, planning has been effective. So this is something that the service has been working on, so they can advance their implementation work to the next, stage. So there's lots of different things in your particular service context that you could do. Some examples are of family surveys, there's anecdotal data. Checking in with the educators on their wellbeing, sending out surveys to the educators as well, but also just, simply, observing children and mapping the incidences of, and the frequency of, the anxiety that they might be experiencing as well, from before you put into place the new practice, and after as well.

**Karin Humphrey:** Okay. Alright, now we're at that stage where we have to start bringing it all together. So, up on the slide, and I'll do a little bit of a summary about what this looks like. So, the aim of this slide is to show that your vision for change and your goals provide that foundational piece for the planning and activities that come next. And then everything you do after that is for the purpose of achieving your vision and goals. And I think we've given a really good example of a service today. We've dug quite deep into an example of what a service is doing with their Be You consultant at the moment to make change around their educator-infant relationships. Let's finish up by bringing all of the pieces together based on this, the service information. So, Trish, if you could use this slide as your guide, can you please summarise everything the service has done to date? And I know some of this might sound like we're repeating to our audience, but I think it brings it all together really nicely.

**Trish Osgood:** Yeah, okay, no problem, Karin. So, obviously, the vision for change was our children to experience calm and settled morning transitions into care that support the nurturing of safe, secure relationships with their educators, and ensuring parents feel confident to leave their children in the educators' care. Which we did revisit, a couple of times, including in the last one. So one of the goals to achieve the vision was, they were going to embed a new transition practice into their morning routine that follows the principles of the four stepping stones approach. Then, of course, they identified the barriers, which was the time required to learn and implement the new approach, how to approach the learning and behaviour change, and the staffing and resources. The enablers where the educators were willing to learn, try new practices to support children's mental health, the service works with their Be You consultant, which was actually a change, an enabler in itself, and that there's strong leadership support, which was, an enabler too. Then, of course, they chose the change strategies of team training, team debriefing, and mentorship, and the actions that they put into place were to source appropriate training, scheduled the training, ensure all team members could attend. They planned for debriefing and

embedded it into schedules, and then identified champions as suitable mentors, and plan, and made a plan to embed mentorship into the services practices. The obviously, the expected outcomes, they were expecting to see, an improvement in the infant and educator relationships, calm, calmer and more settled children, less anxious parents, and obviously, less stressed educators as well, and that their wellbeing would be enhanced. They were also expecting to have families report that they were less anxious about separating from their children at morning, drop-off time as well.

**Karin Humphrey:** Thanks for that, Trish. Can we just go back to that previous slide, just for a little minute? Sorry, just to make you press the back button. I want to remind the audience that we are recording this, and this one, I'd really like you to, this slide, I'd really like you to revisit, and listen to what Trish is saying, and then start piecing that together for yourself. What is your vision for change for your service around infant -educator relationships? What goals might you establish? Has some of what we've said today resonated with you? What are your barriers and enablers? What could you do? What are your change strategies? What are your goals and your actions? And what are the outcomes you're hoping for? So, when you do watch this recording, and of course we encourage you to do that, we also encourage you to reach out to your consultant to chat a little bit further about that. Think about the examples we've given and see if anything resonates with you, or does it support you to make your own decisions about your vision for change and all of the following steps? Thanks, Trish. I just wanted to add that bit in.

**Trish Osgood:** Yeah, thanks. So, just to wrap up our key messages for today, we talked about the four stepping stones approach as one way to practice morning transitions that nurtures educator and infant relationships to support mental health. And obviously if you'd like to learn a little bit more about the four stepping stones approach we recommend that you go back to the In Focus webinar, that we had last month to find out a little bit more about that in depth. We also talked about implementation is the what we want people to do differently, and how we're going to make people's behaviour change, or change people's behaviour. Then we talk about, we also talked about the planning for the what and the how, and that will support you to make meaningful and sustainable change. We also need to note that one of the, our key messages today to take away is that planning involves having a clear vision for change and goals. It's about identifying barriers and enablers and actioning change strategies to support behaviour change. We need to be fully aware in our context of what is going to get in the way and what is going to enable us, because if we want this to be successful, we need to actually plan for that as well. So, we have talked about the Be You consultant, or, even your Be You consultant, if you have one, allocated to your service. We've spoken about them being an actual enabler for change, and as one of the, one of the enablers, haven't we today, Karin?

**Karin Humphrey:** We have. Heaven forbid we're a barrier.

**Trish Osgood:** So, I just want to talk a little bit about how your Be You consultant can actually help you in your service. So we can help you identify the changes you'd like to make in your service. And that might be through looking at your QIP and identifying goals, or any surveys you might have taken. Might be through anecdotal data that's happening. It might be about actually gathering information as well, and finding out what the source of something might be. And we can also help you to plan and select strategies that will work for you. We can help you to navigate barriers and activate enablers as well. We can help you align measures of success with needs and goals, so how are we going to measure it, and what's the most effective way of actually measuring that change? And also, your Be You consultant is there to support you to embed change, so that it becomes meaningful and sustainable. And so it, it might be through just one simple action, it might be through a baby step. Which I know it does sound a little bit complicated in the process, but once you get into the swing of it, it's actually not that hard a process. It really does follow that reflecting, reflective planning cycle, that we all do and we all know so well, that we don't really even need to think about anymore. So, it really is about that, making change effective. It does follow a very similar cycle.

So today, we are going to just say thank you so much for being here. We do value your feedback, and we are going to ask you just to complete the poll, on your screen now, if you can, please, just before you leave today, because that will help us improve our practice, improve our presentations, to make it just a little bit more, meaningful to make it applicable to you. So yeah, once you've finished that poll, we just want to say thank you very much, for coming today, and feel free to log off when you're ready. So, Karin, is there anything you want to say before we?

**Karin Humphrey:** Yeah, so there are a couple of Be You resources that Kat will put into the, I think that's on the next slide, maybe, if we still have those slides? Yeah, so we have the In Focus webinar, which is really important for you to revisit if you haven't already watched. That's now free, freely available on our website. So it's a great webinar to watch. And it really leads into this. Again, this will be available on our website in the coming weeks as well. And then we also have our range of Implementation tools, which are available for anyone that is an Action Team leader within their service. So if you'd like to find out more about what an Action Team Leader is, have a chat to your Be You consultant, or send Be You a message, and a consultant will reach out to you. We have a whole range of Implementation tools and resources that can support your planning. Okay, so your next steps, did you want me to talk to this, Cris? Trish? I don't know why I called you Cris.

**Karin Humphrey:** Did you want me to talk to this?

**Trish Osgood:** Why don't I talk about the educator, and you can do the leader, if that's okay? Sure, sure. Yeah. So, just after you leave today, your next steps, if you're an educator here today, you can go and reflect on how you can build your knowledge and capabilities around supporting infant mental health. Look at all the resources we have on our website. You can contribute to a service-wide approach, and you can just look after your own wellbeing and support your colleagues. Take your ideas to your management, ask them to see if they can get on board. Karin, do you want to talk about the leaders, if they're a leader?

**Karin Humphrey:** Sure, I can. When it says, if you're a leader, and the 'reflect on how you can', I really suggest you reflect on how you can do this with your team, so that you're empowering everyone to have a voice within any decisions that are made, so people understand the why behind practice change. So, prioritise your secure, responsive, educator-infant relationships in your service. How can you do that? How can you identify any gaps or opportunities to enhance and advance your practice? And how can you draw on your Be You consultant to support you make change? As Trish said before we are an enabler to help you make that change. And we will work with service teams and Action Team Leaders, service leaders, to achieve your vision for change. That's not a problem at all. So remember, as a leader, to work alongside your team to make these changes, so that everyone has that voice.

**Trish Osgood:** Thanks, Karin. So that brings us to the end of today's session, so thank you all for joining us, and we hope that you have a wonderful rest of the week.

**Karin Humphrey:** Yeah, and I do want to promote our next In Focus webinar, which is coming up on Thursday the 16th of July at 4pm Eastern Time, and that one's called Healthy, respectful collegial relationships that support educator wellbeing - proactively building relationships and handling conflict when it arises. Very topical. Okay, so as I said, that's on Thursday the 16th of July at 4pm. We'll be joined by education consultant Jennifer Ribarovski, and I am hoping I said that right. I practiced it a few times. Jennifer is the author of an ECA Learning Hub course on managing challenging exchanges, so I look forward to that one as well. Thank you very much, everyone. Enjoy the rest of your day.