

"Those are the exact words I said, Mum!"

Parent's voice

Damien loves to "read" his portfolio. He is so enthusiastic in searching out the stories he loves the most that I have to hide away on my own to read the stories carefully and thoroughly. That way I can make sure that I am not constantly interrupted and asked to look at the next one. When we look at it together, he turns the pages over and over until he gets to his favourite story about the dinosaurs T Rex and Long Neck. He reads out the words that are written about T Rex eating Long Neck, and he says, "Those are the exact words I said, Mum! That's exactly what I said!"

Five weeks after Damien left for school, his mother commented that his portfolio is still one of his most loved books.

Robyn (ECE teacher)

What's happening here?

Damien's mother adds a comment to his assessment portfolio, describing her own interest and his response.

What aspects of empowerment does this assessment exemplify?

Damien perceives that his exact words were valued enough to be written down by the teacher at the time.

Damien can read the words back to his mother. A number of assessments have become literacy artefacts that the children can revisit to read stories about themselves. Damien's early childhood teacher adds to this record by commenting that even five weeks after starting school, his portfolio is still one of his most loved books.

How might this documented assessment contribute to developing empowerment?

Portfolios are available for families to take home.

Damien's mother's contribution to his assessment portfolio is another illustration of how valued the collection of assessments can be for the family. Damien's mother likes to read it "carefully and thoroughly" and in her own time.

What might this tell us about informal noticing, recognising, and responding in this place?

The teachers listen to the children and write down their "exact words" when stories are dictated.

The teachers have relationships with families that may continue after the child goes to school. (In this case, the teacher can make a comment five weeks after Damien left for school.)