



supporting parents and
children to learn together

Introducing Peep Learning Together Programme

The Peep Learning Together Programme (PeepLTP) is an evidence-based adult learning program with a curriculum that supports parents to understand more about how children learn – and to do more of the things at home that make a difference to children’s outcomes. Intended for parents of children from birth to school-age, it can be used to communicate concepts and ideas with parents about how to enhance the home learning environment, the parent-child relationship and children’s literacy and self-esteem. It can be used with parents in a variety of settings including one on one, parent groups, case management and playgroups. The program empowers parents to make the most of everyday learning opportunities including singing, sharing books and stories, and talking about a wide range of ideas, thoughts, and feelings. PeepLTP is a curriculum for parents about the home learning environment, child development and the utilisation of teaching moments in everyday activities.

Peep LTP aims are to help parents:

- develop secure attachment relationships with their babies and young children
- improve the Home Learning Environment

By helping parents, it aims to improve children’s:

- personal social and emotional development
- communication and language
- early literacy
- early maths
- health and physical development

Peep Learning Together Programme (PeepLTP) was designed and developed by the Oxford-based (UK) organisation Peep, in 1995 and has been extensively researched during this time.

Based on evidence

PeepLTP is based on the evidenced importance of the parent-child relationship and the early home learning environment and utilises the ORIM Framework; several independent research studies have evaluated PeepLTP.

The **parent-child relationship** holds great importance to a child’s development and is a strong predictor of a child’s future outcomes. A secure attachment between a child and their main caregiver contributes to social and emotional development and communication is the foundation for the child’s ability to connect with others.

The **Early home learning environment** can be considered the most cost-effective modifiable predictor of a child’s later success. This was demonstrated by the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children data, which demonstrates that the home learning environment when children are 2-3 years of age, significantly predicts academic performance at year 3 as measured by NAPLAN (Yu & Daraganova, 2014). Across the four home learning measures, home learning index, reading frequency, number of books, and out-of-home activities, even after adjusting for socio-demographic factors, the high group achieved significantly better reading and numeracy scores on the year 3 NAPLAN. Amongst the findings, were differences in reading and numeracy scores equivalent to 4 months and 12 weeks (respectively) more schooling for children with more books at 2-3 years, and 12 and 6 weeks (respectively) for children who had high levels of home activity at 2-3 years.

The ORIM framework- Developed by Professors Peter Hannon and Cathy Nutbrown (University of Sheffield). Working with families, they noticed that all parents and carers support their children's learning by naturally providing Opportunities, Recognition, Interaction and Modelling (ORIM for short). However, when we (adults) understand how ORIM helps children to learn, we're more likely to think about and do these more often in everyday life - which enhances children’s learning opportunities. It promotes talking, playing, singing, sharing books and stories, etc, and when doing so, keeping ORIM in mind.

ORIM is threaded through PeepLTP- it helps practitioners to see and value what parents and carers are already doing to support children's learning.

Research on PeepLTP

PeepLTP has been evaluated in several independent research studies by the Universities of Oxford, Queen's Belfast and Warwick. These show that Peep:

- successfully reaches isolated families and engages them in their children's learning
- helps parents become more aware of their children's development and how to foster it
- helps children develop good foundations for language, literacy, and strong self-esteem
- enables practitioners from a wide range of professions to develop new skills and fresh approaches to unlocking parents' potential rather than focusing on their problems.

A Randomised Controlled Trial (RCT) study of the Learning Together Programme the Learning Together Study, was carried out by Queen's University Belfast, funded by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF). Four formal research studies on the Peep Learning Together programme have been carried out by the University of Oxford:

- Birth to School Study
- Enabling Parents Study
- Foundation Peep Study
- Room to Play Study

Five of the families who were part of the Birth to School Study took part in a small Tracer study twelve years after they attended Peep, involving a semi-structured interview

The University of Warwick has carried out the following research studies:

- Early Explorers: Integrating partner professionals to support parents with their children's development from birth in child health clinics
- Reflective Parenting - Peep Antenatal Programme. This is a pilot report with interim findings.

Case studies from organisations using Peep programmes, around the UK and beyond, demonstrate some of the outcomes of using Peep in a wide variety of contexts and settings.

This includes a report by the Learning and Work Institute on 'Increasing the employability of parents/carers', which includes a focus on family learning in Derby Peep.

Australian research

The Education Benalla Program; A Place-based Action and Collective Impact in Regional Australia; implemented PeepLTP within their Early Years focus to improve School Readiness. Consequential AEDC data revealed improved rates of school readiness, with a significant increase in the rate of children developmentally on track on the *Language & Cognitive skills* and *Communication skills & General Knowledge* domains.

The Peep programme

There are two programmes that make up Peep.

1. Peep antenatal programme: getting to know your baby

Peep antenatal programme supports expectant parents (mums and dads) to:

- think about their baby, tune in to their baby's feelings and respond sensitively (also known as reflective function),
- understand the importance of sensitive parenting to developing a loving, consistent, and secure attachment,
- become more aware of the social and emotional aspects of the transition to parenthood,
- manage their own (sometimes difficult) feelings that are aroused by a new baby,
- meet other expectant or new parents and develop a supportive network group, and engage with other local services,
- reduce the risk to the early parent–infant relationship (by helping to prevent, for example, isolation, anxiety, and low-level depression).

These things help parent-baby bonding and attachment. Research indicates that strong relationships enhance parents' confidence and self-esteem. They also contribute to better outcomes for the child in terms of their cognitive development (learning and understanding), the relationships they build, and their resilience to cope if life gets tough.

2. Peep Learning Together Programme

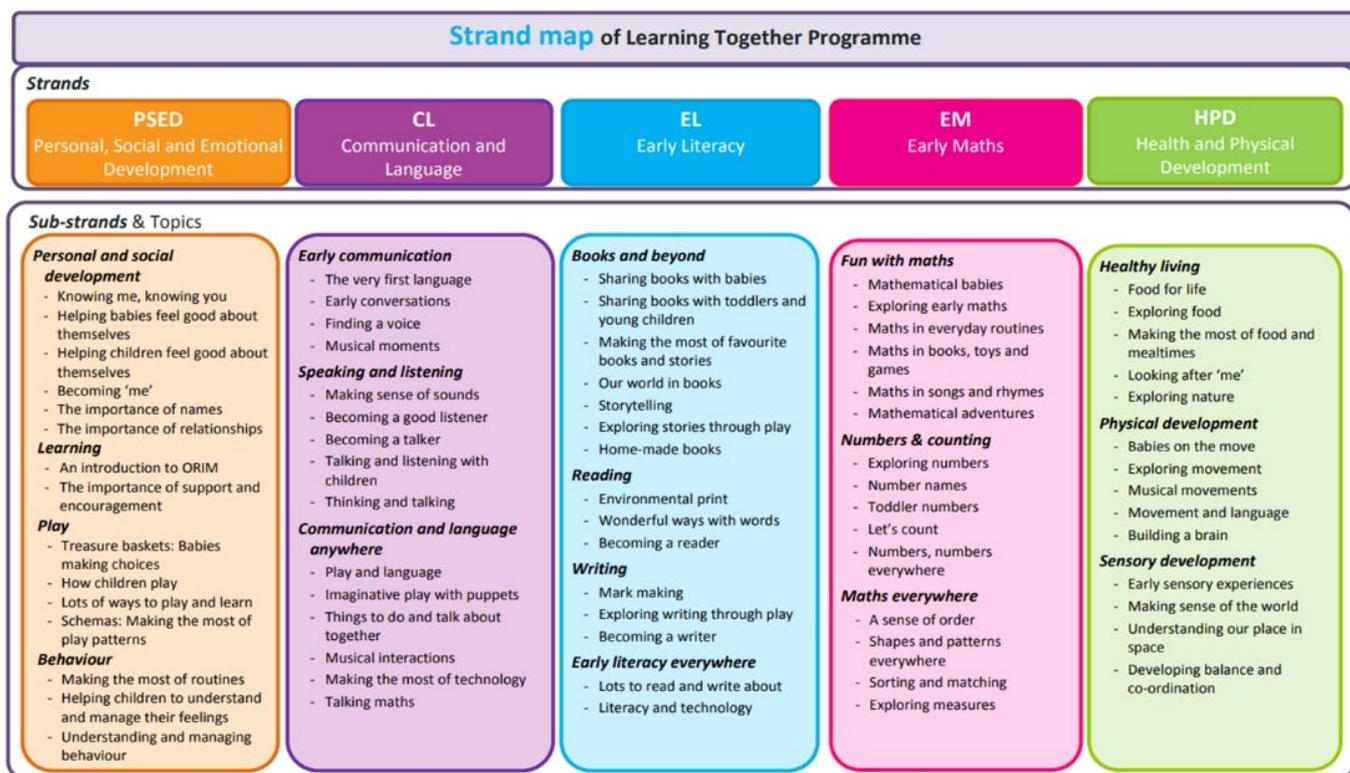
This programme values and extends what parents/carers already do to support their child's learning in everyday life. Peep is a strengths-based approach to working with families, focusing on doing 'with' rather than doing 'to' parents, supporting:

- Parents and carers to improve their children's life chances, by developing sensitive and responsive relationships with their babies and children, and by making the most of day-to-day learning opportunities – listening, talking, playing, singing and sharing books and stories together
- babies and children to become confident communicators and learners through play
- communities to narrow the attainment gap, which appears even before children reach school.

The Programme covers five strands of child development for babies, toddlers and pre-schoolers:

- **personal, social, and emotional development**
- **communication and language**
- **early literacy**
- **early maths**
- **health and physical development**

Each strand's topics and activities are underpinned by the ORIM framework - a framework that focuses both on opportunities for learning for the child and supporting a positive parent-child relationship.



Practitioners from any sector can use the structured but flexible Programme once they have completed the two-day PeepLTP training.

The programme includes access to the online and downloadable information, ideas, and activities within 74 child development topics set out above. An example of a topic materials and resources are [here](#).

PeepLTP sessions

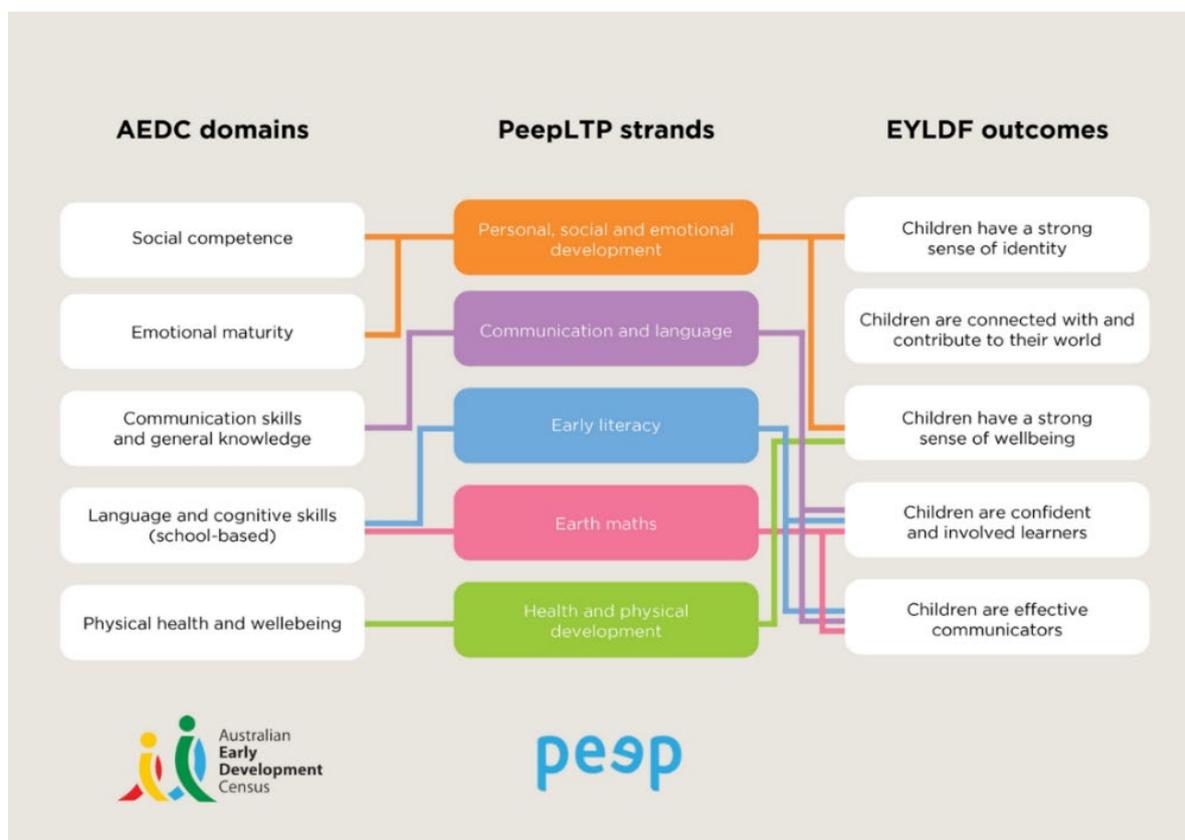
Peep-trained practitioners share the Peep Learning Together Programme (LTP) with families through conversations and joint activities focusing on aspects of children's learning and development, underpinned by the ORIM learning framework. Peep sessions are for parents/carers and children together. Each session is based on a child development topic, which contains:

- talk time, to discuss key ideas with parents and carers relating to the topic focus
- songs and rhymes

- books and stories
- ways to put ORIM into action (Opportunities, Recognition, Interaction, Modelling)
- play activities (during the session and/or ideas to try at home).

Peep sessions raise awareness and model how singing, talking, playing and sharing books and stories together help strengthen relationships and develop children's listening, talking and later literacy. Families also consistently report that Peep sessions are fun, increase their confidence (both adults and children) and provide an important source of ideas and support from the practitioners and other families.

The five developmental strands of PeepLTP align with both the five AEDC domains and the five EYLDF outcomes to support children in the early years.



Background to PeepLTP in Australia

The Brotherhood of St Lawrence **2-Gen program** was established in 2016 to address generational poverty. A world-wide search to address two elements: 1. parent knowledge, capacity, and engagement in their child's learning, and 2. create employment pathways, led BSL to the Peep Learning Together Program researched, designed, and developed by Peep (Oxford, UK). Recognition of the impact that PeepLTP could have across the early years, parenting and family service systems and sectors in Australia, BSL successfully became the first and sole Australian holder Licence for PeepLTP in 2016.

Soon after, Peep CEO and senior staff came to Australia to assist BSL to establish the PeepLTP training network and support the programme's growth in Australia. Staff were trained as PeepLTP practitioners for the **2-Gen** program. The following year, Peep returned to Australia to train selected BSL Peep practitioners to become trainers of practitioners and become Train the Trainer.

These trainers were further instructed and supported to provide implementation support and mentoring, deliver communities of practice, and to monitor and audit standards, quality, and fidelity of the program in Australia.

Playgroup Victoria and PeepLTP

In 2018, mutual interests brought Playgroup Victoria and BSL together, resulting in a collaboration to advocate for PeepLTP to be added to the **Victorian School Readiness Funding Menu**, which was successful.

In late 2019, when BSL modified their strategic directions and changes to leadership/structure, they decided not to proceed with renewing the Peep Licence. PV, eager for an opportunity of revenue diversification, submitted

their interest to PeepLTP to hold the Licence in Australia and was awarded the sole Australian Licence in November 2020. The organisation continues to hold the only Licence of PeepLTP outside of United Kingdom.

PeepLTP; developing the program in Australia

In January 2021 PV employed the only PeepLTP-authorized, accredited, and qualified PeepLTP trainer in Australia to manage and lead the PeepLTP program. There is no other person who can undertake these duties; this strengthens our contract with PeepLTP both currently and into the future.

As a for-purpose investment, we anticipated slow growth over the first 3-year contract, focusing on building partnerships, engaging with significant early years stakeholders and heavy and strategic promotion across all early years and community sectors. In January 2022, we were successful in our application for PeepLTP to be added to a second evidence-base menu, the **AIFS menu of evidence** for the Communities for Children (CfC) national program; this has been an important achievement and resulted in increased awareness of the programme, enquiries, and bookings for training.

PeepLTP has also endorsed our plans for further development and expansion to add Peep Antenatal to our current Licence and development of training networks in other Australian States.

The Licence is expected to be renewed in November 2023; this expectation is based on regular discussions with PeepLTP UK (Dr. Sally Smith (PeepLTP CEO)). Dr. Smith has indicated their satisfaction with and support for our efforts to date, and our plans for national development and growth with specific focus on the delivery of training and implementation support standards and quality, and thus fidelity of the programme.

Revenue from PeepLTP

PeepLTP is a for-purpose program that PV has invested in to be the Licensee. Playgroup Victoria currently covers all costs associated with PeepLTP in Australia. Training, its only source of revenue, partially covers the costs of:

- the one-off registration fee Playgroup Victoria pays to PeepLTP for each practitioner to have access to the full programme and its resources and materials
- delivering the 2-day training
- ongoing implementation support for practitioners
- delivery of Communities of Practice

PV does not receive any government or philanthropic funding to deliver PeepLTP training and support. Consistent with the UK scenario, to access the PeepLTP training, there is a one-off payment, which is typically sourced from professional development funds from within professionals' own organisations, via funding streams such as CfC (if relevant) or through philanthropic funding opportunities.

Since taking on the Licence in November 2020, and the significant efforts towards engagement of the early years, family and community sectors, awareness of and interest in PeepLTP has increased significantly since February 2021, correlating to increased revenue from PeepLTP training, particularly in this second year of our contract. In the first two months of this financial year, we have already trained almost 4/5 as many professionals, as we did in the 12 months prior.

Two other important aspects that have been favourable to an increase in revenue so far and moving forward:

- the development of the online format improving access to PeepLTP training and therefore we can train more practitioners, and,
- the potential establishment of additional training networks under the auspice of the National Manager of PeepLTP.

PeepLTP in diverse sectors

There are currently more than 300 PeepLTP trained practitioners in Australia. As a flexible and adaptable programme, PeepLTP is utilised in diverse early years settings and already noted, professionals from a wide range of backgrounds and experience. For example, some practitioners may use PeepLTP content/materials to support conversations with a family on a specific topic/challenge that are experiencing, and others may run a community playgroup bringing in PeepLTP topics as needed. Other PeepLTP practitioners deliver PeepLTP groups, delivering the programme weekly.

For example, PeepLTP is currently being delivered in:

NSW

- PlayStrong program

- NSW Health Department running PeepLTP groups with recently arrived refugee

VIC

- Kindergartens in Victoria – kinder teachers use PeepLTP with parents as a one-off, 1:1, and/or weekly
- The Benalla Today Tomorrow Foundation program in PeepLTP playgroups
- Emma House – crisis housing for women and children leaving family violence situations – in 1:1 and groups of families
- Victorian Aboriginal Childcare Agency case management 1:1 home visit

Practitioners have also been trained in the following states:

- Victoria
- Tasmania
- South Australia
- NSW – all areas, and specific projects in Wollongong and Tamworth
- Western Australia – Broome

As already noted, PeepLTP is currently delivered by a diversity of professionals and settings:

| Sectors and professionals using PeepLTP nationally | | | |
|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Early intervention | Supported Playgroups | Kindergartens | Social workers |
| ECEC | Counselling services | Speech pathologists | Psychologists |
| Parenting and family services | Psychologists | Early years educators | Maternal and child health nurses |
| Children’s therapeutic programs | Community/ neighbourhood hubs | Parent support | Council staff |
| Case management | Schools | Occupational therapists | Libraries |

Interest in PeepLTP

Since January 2021, training uptake is steady; as we continue to promote PeepLTP across Australia, interest continues to increase. The online training format is very popular, making it easier for professionals to fit the training within their schedule, and it also enables more training to be delivered.

The inclusion of PeepLTP on the **Victorian School Readiness Funding Menu** and the **Australian Institute of Family Studies Menu of Evidence** (permitting spending of SRF and CfC funding on PeepLTP) has been significant, enabling many kindergarten educators and other organisations to train staff and utilise PeepLTP with young families. These account for the rapid increase in the numbers of people being trained in the first two months of the 22/23 financial year compared to the previous years.

Statements from trainees include:

“It gives you confidence and the resources to run informative, meaningful groups for our families and is evidence-based. The resources are so user-friendly and family friendly. You know that parents and their children will love the topics, the activities and the empowerment that this program can deliver.”

“This is practical training and can suit many people who work in different kinds of early childhood settings”

“I had such a great time doing this training and I now feel I have the tools to embed this further in my work. The tools available are so comprehensive.”

“This course equips practitioners in many ways to build positive relationships with families. It really focused on helping parents to feel empowered and knowing that they can help children learn from home in so many practical and fun ways.”

Quality assurance

The PeepLTP training course has its own professional learning and development framework, and quality and standard requirements set out by PeepLTP. The training and support offered to PeepLTP practitioners is audited and monitored annually by PeepLTP, to ensure it is delivered as per these required standards and quality.

Playgroup Victoria provides the managerial and infrastructure support for the PeepLTP program to succeed in Australia.