

Applying the Concerns-Based Approach Model to AI tools in ECE



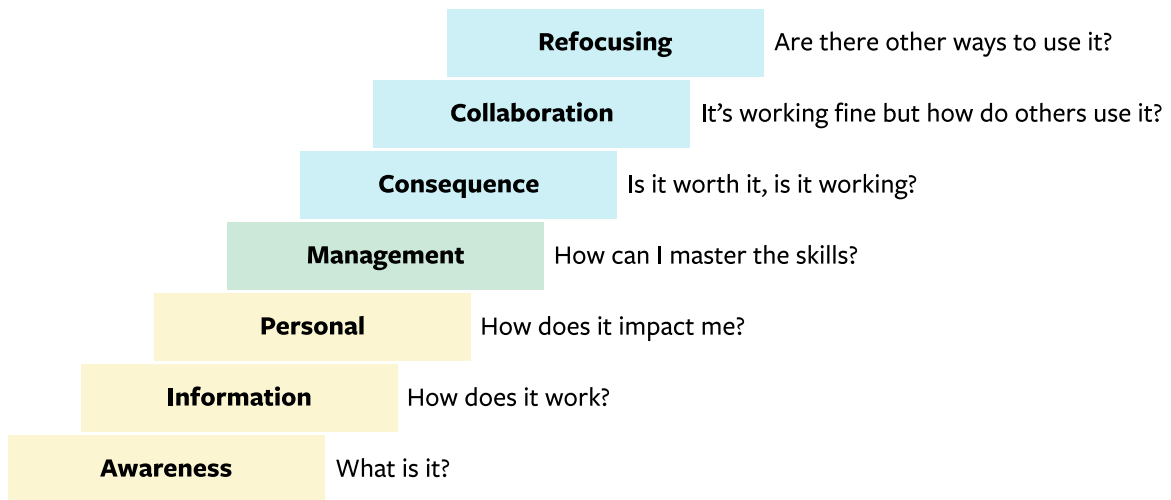


Since 1987, the Concerns-Based Approach Model (CBAM) has been a helpful framework for educators and leaders to think through change and the adoption of educational innovations.

Realistically these innovations, whether they be new computers, voice recorders or artificial intelligence (AI) tools, don't get absorbed into our practice overnight. This framework points us towards the benefits of 'change as a living process' rather than a solitary, static event. The CBAM allows educators to gauge where they currently stand in their change journey and encourages thoughtful progression based on individual comfort levels.

This document outlines how to apply the CBAM to the use of artificial intelligence tools in early childhood education.

The Concerns-Based Approach Model expressed as a staircase



(Rutherford, Huling-Austin, & Hall, 1987)

By expressing the model as a staircase, we can see how thoughtful progression and adoption of changes can occur.

Yellow

The first three steps are focused on the individual, with an emphasis on the use of “I”, as in “I am unsure about this new tool.”

Green

The middle stage (management) is focused on mastery of adoption to the point where the use of the tools becomes routine and easier to do, with the emphasis changing to focus on the activity, and not on self.

Blue

The last three stages are focused on the results and impact of the activity. There is also a level of inquiry, innovation and exploration.



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Level of concern	Expressed as	Main emphasis	Strategies
Awareness <i>Aware of AI tools but not interested</i>	“I don’t know anything about AI and I am not interested”	Raising awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New staff induction processes • Staff meetings and discussions
Informational <i>Interested in knowing more about AI tools</i>	“I don’t know a great deal but I would like to know more” “How does AI work?”	Providing information about AI and AI tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction webinar • Getting started resources • Storypark help centre • Storypark website
Personal <i>Wants to know the personal aspect of using AI</i>	“How will AI affect me?” “What’s my plan to incorporate AI in my work?” “How will this impact my teaching and my job?”	Establishing relationships and support. Planning PD requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-on-one assistance, buddy system • Action plan to support use and growth
Management <i>How will the adoption of AI tools be managed?</i>	“How can I master the skills needed to use and understand AI?”	Developing and demonstrating procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AI policy for access and use • Implementation plan • Technical support • Shared ideas
Consequence <i>Interested in the impact on children and centre</i>	“Will this improve my work to increase children’s learning outcomes?” “Is it worth using AI?”	Clarifying and evaluation effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake a self review/action research • Read case studies
Collaboration <i>Interested in working with others to make effective and thoughtful change</i>	“How can I work with others to make a greater impact?” “It’s working fine but how do others do it?”	Disseminating ideas about AI use and working with others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer networks • Seminars • Conference presentations • Contributions to staff meetings and newsletters • Join AI ECE social media groups
Refocusing <i>Beginning to refine the use of AI innovation to improve outcomes</i>	“I know a better/another way to use this”	Concentrating efforts on new developments and/or innovative strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read research, blog posts • Provide feedback to Storypark • Using evidence on your practice to see how you grow

The adoption of AI tools in ECE is the perfect use case for the CBAM. Some of your teaching team may be enthusiastically on their journey, while others are just getting started.

Try introducing the CBAM at a team meeting and having a discussion about it there, asking people to self-review after the meeting: - 'where do you think you're at currently?' Each one of your team is likely aware of what barriers are stopping them from getting to where they want to be or the next step up. Then come back and have some 1:1s to check in (because not everyone's open to sharing the fact that they're still at the beginning.) Use the ideas in the strategies column to brainstorm 'where to from here?' actions.

This model won't stop educators from exploring what AI tools have to offer but will help them stay committed to their purpose and values!

Citation: Hall, G. E., & Hord, S. M. (1987). Change in schools: Facilitating the process. New York: State University of New York Press.





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