

# Creating the family engagement practice guides

## About the guides

The Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO) has released [practice guides](#) for practitioners synthesising the research evidence on promoting and supporting family engagement<sup>1</sup> for children's early learning and development and students' learning outcomes.

For practitioners to be confident with using recommendations from research evidence, they need to know the research evidence was both created and synthesised using high-quality research methods. This 2-page explainer describes the process we followed to synthesise the available research evidence on family engagement. A more detailed description is also [available](#).

## What process did we use to create the guides?

To create the practice guides, we used a [rapid review](#) process.

A rapid review uses a specific, step-by-step process for searching the available research literature. The steps are illustrated opposite:



We used a rapid review because it:

- makes the findings more **rigorous** (for example, we don't just include studies that are easy to find, well-known or politically popular)
- makes it easier to **update** the practice guides (we know exactly where we've searched before, so we can run the same search in future to capture any new research evidence)
- helps us to **focus** on the question we're investigating (there is a vast amount of literature on family engagement, which answers all sorts of questions and includes both high-quality and lower-quality studies)
- aligns education search strategies with search strategies used in **other evidence-based fields** such as health
- is more timely than a **systematic review** (another type of review method), meaning that findings are more current.

## What types of studies did we include, and how did we find them?

In 2017, the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) in the UK searched the research evidence to answer a very similar question on family engagement. Their search was extensive and their findings were published in 2019. We built on their work by using the same search terms and the same databases (where possible).<sup>2</sup>

We included studies that met the criteria in the table below.

Our initial search located 2,254 papers. After removing duplicates, we screened 1,737 papers to see if they met the criteria for included studies. We supplemented our included studies with meta-analyses and systematic reviews from the EEF search. Ultimately, 24 papers were used to inform the practice guides.

A [full list of criteria](#)