



Series #3: Caregiver Support

Tips for Tots



Tip #5: Building Up Your Team!

Strategies

Did you know?

A healthy work environment that promotes a team approach is essential for staff to feel satisfied and effective in their work. An early childhood center can help their staff by being supportive and encouraging to each of their staff. Cooperation, problem solving, communication and sharing decisions are important to functioning as a team. Talking and reflecting about what has worked and what has not worked will help build communication and professional skills. Teambuilding can have a positive effect on the overall environment.

Center Administrators can support the classroom teachers to be motivated to increase their cooperation and support towards their coworkers by allowing opportunities for the staff to work together and see each other as valuable resources. One way to accomplish this is through 'Team Teaching'. The concept of team teaching refers to understanding your coworkers' needs, values, and beliefs. Mutual respect, compromise, and support lay the foundation for becoming a team. Classroom management and lesson planning become a team effort where staff identify goals, strategies and clarify roles. Team teaching allows teachers to create and model an environment that thrives on communication, respect and working together. It values each member and gives the individual a chance to be heard.

Resources:

<http://www.teacherhub.com>

<http://www.teachingexpertise.com/articles/building-an-effective-childcare-team-3179>

<http://www.greatresultsteambuilding.net>

- Center Directors are in a position to set the stage for their staff to feel productive and happy in their roles as Early Childhood Educators. Encouraging positive interactions between coworkers will help them improve communication and collaboration with each other.
- Create "Kindness Containers" (small boxes, buckets, or plastic jars). Have each staff member decorate their own container. Place them in view as a reminder to use them. When a staff member notices a kindness done by another staff member, put a note in the container. At the end of the day spend a few minutes sharing what you noticed. This can help build communication and thoughtfulness.
- It is important that all teachers in a classroom are actively involved in all the stages of the lesson: planning, presentation, feedback, assessment, and reflection. Discussions with colleagues prior to teaching and preparation time can be as important as teaching the lessons. Set a time weekly to make classroom plans, discuss and set goals for children, review family interactions and reflect on what is going well and what might need to be adapted.
- Weekly choose a day and time for everyone to share something positive that recently happened in the classroom. This could involve a student or each other. Select one teacher to create something special and post it in the room for staff, children and families to see. This can be a certificate, a note on colorful paper, a photo or a group of photos, etc.
- Set up a team retreat. This can be a great opportunity to have fun and learn more about your coworkers. This could include: a get together at a member's home, a restaurant, or even at your own center. Consider planning a fun activity and don't forget the food or treats. Try to do this at least once every three months.
- The team will benefit if members are friendly, respect each other (no gossiping), be willing to lend a hand, ask for help when needed and accept criticism as an opportunity to improve professionally.
- It is also important that each member be dependable and understands that their actions affect others.

Contact your area ECCP Consultant for **free** Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation services.

To learn of the consultant in your area please visit ECCP at www.eccpct.com or call ECCP at (860) 704-6378

Brought to you by ECCP

Early Childhood Consultation Partnership®

A program of Advanced Behavioral Health
www.abhct.com

Funded by CT Department of Children & Families



Advanced Behavioral Health, Inc.