



Voices from the Schools: School Teams Share their Experiences

Early Years Symposium
October 1, 2011

Advice we'd give to a Year 1 school...

- If I knew then, what I know now...
 - Be reassured and confident – this model really works!
 - Relationship first! ...and everything falls into place
 - Visit successful classrooms to learn & celebrate
 - Create the 'teaching team' as 'equals' from Day 1 (i.e., common release time & PD, co-planning)
 - Take time to share knowledge and specialization – it strengthens the team

Roles & Responsibilities

- Flow of the Day...
 - Flexibility adds much...
 - Play-based inquiry leads to the co-creation of rich learning environments
 - Optimize each team member's talents
- Flow of Curriculum...
 - Create common planning time
 - Student-led inquiry leads to curriculum coverage
 - Much trust in staff to engage in planning
 - Both team members collaborate in reporting children's progress

Building Relationships

- Common Ground...
 - Re-establishing of roles can contribute to positive communication
 - Knowledge transfer contributed positively
 - We view relationships broadly – includes consultants, Early Learning Educators administrators, primary teachers, families...
 - Time to plan & focus on the children makes all the difference!
- Working on...
 - Signals of equity - Both educators names on Report Cards, the classroom door, and newsletters
 - We'll continue to re-think "curriculum" and "developmentally appropriate" practice

Families

- Fullday led to significantly less anxiety/stress for children
- Documentation made children's learning more visible
- Multiple communication strategies are helpful in sharing children's learning
- Educating families about what we do & why (i.e., observational visits, multimedia, newsletters, events)

Role of Administration

- Valuable Supports
 - Common release time
 - Celebrating success – trusting staff
 - Building a ‘collaborative culture’ in the school
 - Modeling respect and positive communication
 - Strategizing for logistical support

Our Wish List

- Common planning time
- Bigger spaces
- Classroom caps
- Continued advocacy especially from principals and consultants
- On-line forum for sharing experiences & collaboration
- Interprofessional training for ECE students & Teacher Candidates