

LEADERSHIP IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Leadership is about using your knowledge, skills, personality, and experience to positively influence early childhood education.

DEFINING LEADERSHIP



RECEIVING AND GIVING FEEDBACK



STRENGTHENING YOUR LEADERSHIP



COACHING CORNER



DEFINING LEADERSHIP



Every early childhood educator has the capacity to lead and, by doing so, improve outcomes for children and families. Educators demonstrate leadership in their classrooms, contribute to their school communities, and influence the teaching profession as a whole.



What makes you a teacher leader?

You carefully consider the critical role you play in setting your children up for success in future school and life experiences.

You are reflective about your practices and interactions, and encourage others to reflect on theirs as well.

You model lifelong learning for your children and colleagues. You show that there is always room to grow.

You advocate for what is right for young children and their families. You stand up and speak up. You meet challenges with ideas and solutions.

You carry yourself professionally. You treat others with dignity and respect. You have strong character.

RECEIVING AND GIVING FEEDBACK



As teacher leaders, your actions support the mission and vision of your classroom, school, and the profession of early childhood education. One of the most important ways you fulfill this role is through **effective communication** with your colleagues, administrators, and other professionals in the field.



Feedback is a natural extension of reflection. It can be used to acknowledge strengths, highlight accomplishments, or provide specific and objective information about how practices can be improved.

How you approach and engage in feedback sessions with others sets a powerful example for those around you.



In any given moment, we have two options: to step forward into growth or to step backwards into safety.

-Abraham Maslow

RECEIVING AND GIVING FEEDBACK



How should I receive feedback?

- **Stay open-minded.** It can be difficult to hear constructive feedback about your practices. Assume that the feedback provider has the best intentions about bringing something to your attention.
- **Actively listen.** Give your full attention to the provider so you can understand their message.
- **Reflect.** Consider how the feedback aligns with your goals and knowledge of developmentally-appropriate practices.
- **Follow-up.** Let the person who shared feedback know that you have thoughtfully considered their input. Reflect on whether new goals are needed and identify the support that will help you achieve them.



How can I give effective feedback?

- **Begin with a collaborative partnership.** First, take time to build a supportive relationship with the feedback recipient.
- **Be specific.** Connect your feedback to actions and their impact (on the child, classroom, event, etc.).
- **Show empathy.** Consider the recipient's perspective with understanding.
- **Actively listen.** Invite the recipient's response to your feedback.
- **Follow-up.** Revisit the conversation after some time for reflection. Support progress. Acknowledge growth.

STRENGTHENING YOUR LEADERSHIP



Strategies for Teacher Leaders

- Make children's learning, development, and well-being the primary focus in your classroom.
- Address children's rights and value their individuality in positive, courageous, and constructive ways.
- Build respectful, trusting, and responsive relationships with children, families, and colleagues.
- Collaboratively create a community of learners in your classroom.
- Informally mentor an early educator who is new to the profession.



- Connect with agencies and organizations in your local community.
- Share ideas and strategies that you are using in the classroom at staff meetings or Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings.
- Join an early childhood professional organization and engage in collaborative spaces or workgroups.
- Attend professional workshops or conferences, and share what you learned with your colleagues.
- Plan opportunities for family engagement and learning.
- Share ideas and connect with other educators on the Early Educator Support Facebook page.



COACHING CORNER



- How do you see yourself as a leader in your classroom?
- How do you think your leadership impacts children's learning and development?
- In what ways do you model leadership skills such as collaboration, empathy, or problem-solving for the children in your classroom?
- How do you contribute to a positive school culture?
- What are some ways that you have supported (or would like to support) your colleagues?
- Can you share a time where you took initiative or led a change in your school community? What did you learn from that experience?
- What leadership roles or partnerships have you taken on outside of your classroom to support early childhood education in your community?
- What issues in early childhood education are you passionate about and how do you use your voice to advocate for change?
- How do you help others, like families or community members, understand the importance of early childhood education?
- How do you use ethical decision-making when facing challenging situations in your role?
- In what ways do you reflect on your practice as a leader and how do those reflections guide your professional growth?

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